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ABSTRACT

This guide contains three Latin American study units for students in junior and community colleges on the topic of Mexican women in Anahuac and New Spain. Objectives are to help the student read history, exercise empathy, think critically, stimulate interest in the study of women, and understand the dignity and fascination of the Mexican heritage. Unit one focuses on what Aztecs believed a woman had to do and be to be considered good or bad. Unit two deals with what Spanish, Moorish, Indian, and Black women were actually doing in the 16th century in Mexico City just before the Conquest. Unit three presents primary source materials which illustrate the treatment of a woman genius (Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz) in 17th century Mexico. Translations from the original Nahuatl or Spanish contain oral histories, surveys of public opinion, notary records, wills, letters, and autobiographies. Each unit begins with an introduction to the text and ends with an information section which provides comparisons, additional facts, or strategies, and questions for reflection and discussion. To evaluate the academic work, a take-home essay is suggested. (Author/NE)

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MEXICAN WOMEN IN ANAHUAC AND NEW SPAIN

Three Study Units

Aztec Roles, Spanish Notary Revelations, Creole Genius

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by Doris M. Ladd

LATIN AMERICAN CURRICULUM UNITS FOR
JUNIOR AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

58 013 338

INSTITUTE OF LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

INSTITUTE OF LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
William P. Glade, *Director*
Lawrence S. Graham, *Associate Director*

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For
Nettie Lee Benson

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MEXICAN WOMEN IN ANAHUAC AND NEW SPAIN

Three Study Units

Aztec Roles, Spanish Notary Revelations, Creole Genius

Purpose:

1. To remind you of the dignity and fascination of the Mexican heritage.
2. To stimulate your interest in the study of women.
3. To help you think critically: you, too, can be a spitting cobra.
4. To help you exercise empathy.
5. To help you learn how to read history. (see No. 3)
6.

Introduction

This unit on colonial Mexican women has been prepared with a Simply Awful audience in mind: in his black leather jacket with a snake eating an eagle on the back, he lounges in the last row of the room, alternately dozing and leering. He snarls, disrupting the class: (1) Why should I have to do this? What's in it for me? and (2) How do I know you're not lying? You're not Mexican, how do you know?

When I first encountered an audience like this, I mentally fainted. I cried all night. But somewhere in the twenty-one years I've been teaching, I developed the peculiar suspicion that such students are often incredibly right, that they are at the heart of the matter even when they snarl and defy me. In despair I concluded that you can't teach anyone anything. In joy I learned that students do the learning themselves. The best that teachers can do is to help students learn how best to teach themselves.

In that perspective the snarling questions can be rephrased. What's in it for anyone? Why do we, the students of history, like to read history so much? What's fun about it? How can we share that joy of discovery so that other students can do it themselves and then maybe feel it, too? The one quality of mind that college students seem to have more of than other people is empathy. The study of history involves a great many empathy exercises. History helps take us momentarily out of our skins, helps us see with the eyes of another. History allows us the luxury of that slowdown, wonder. It stammers in our ear, "What if everyone were right?" History allows us to be insiders on adventure and builds our superiority complex when we can tell what really happened. And don't forget how deliciously satisfying criticism and fault-finding can be.

The second snarl, the one about lying, is very serious indeed. What do you do when you think the teacher has lied to you? What have you done in your experience in school? The discipline of history phrases this very serious concern into a question: How do you know what you know? This is a perfectly respectable scholarly question. Any student may responsibly ask it of a teacher or an author anywhere, anytime. We ought to ask it of each other often.

The answer is as complicated as a lie itself. It is best to approach the

problem in slow motion. First, the teacher/author. How did he find it out? Who is this dude? What's in it for him? Second, you, the questioner. What sounds fishy? Are there some facts you know of that do not fit? Or are you objecting to the feeling or the interpretation?

One way to lie is to rip things out of context. This exercise does precisely that. But its purpose is to remind you that there were thousands of real live women in Mexico long before you were born. Most Mexican history books read as if it had been a nation of men from Aztec times to now. And that is either funny or a lie or both.

Another way to lie is to tangle time and perception. Is your point based on your experience and feelings of the here and now? Or are you trying to escape your skin and grope to describe how they behaved then? Both strategies are very good and very important. Just be aware which one you are using. The inside, "I-feel, I-react" view makes history a part of the humanities, which seek to enrich you as a human being. The humanities allow us to "use" others in order to discover something about ourselves. The "outside" view makes history a part of the social sciences. The social sciences demand that we try to be "objective," to retreat from ourselves to the point that we can clearly see other people and their experiences as "objects" for our analysis. Perhaps it is the difference between mirror and window. Both have their place in most of our lives.

Every historical fact you have ever learned is simply the answer to a question that a historian has asked. No more. No less. I think that anyone who reads history seriously is a historian, so very soon you will be creating historical truths of your own. From the humanities comes the conviction that your point of view (or perception) represents some of the finest things about you as a person: your sense of moral outrage, your passionate commitments, your certainty about what is right and wrong. Your point of view often includes your compassion, your generosity, your sense of beauty. Yet social scientists call this point of view a bias and warn that unless you control it, it can seriously distort your view of what was real and true to them, there, in that strange, foreign place, then, so long ago. To be aware of bias is the first step in controlling it.

The history books you have been reading are textbooks, general summaries of great men and events, told in chronological order. Textbooks have three levels of bias: the historical material's, the author's, and yours. Textbooks are secondary sources, once removed from the historical event by the author's interpretation.

The exercises here are primary sources. The texts are written by eyewitnesses to real-life historical situations. Oral histories, surveys of public opinion, notary records, wills, letters, and autobiographies are all primary sources. The account of a historical event by a participant is a primary source called a chronicle. In primary sources there are only two levels of bias: the author's and yours.

Most students never get to read the original, primary sources. This is a pity, for to learn how to distinguish and control bias, it is easier to deal with two levels. My advice (free, and worth every penny) is to practice on the primary until you gain confidence. The interpretation will be yours alone. Then, strong and competent, try your hand at a textbook.

In choosing the content of these units on Mexican women, I did not much care what they were about. Any little thing that would remind us that there were good or distinguished or hard-working or reprehensible women in Mexico was good enough for me. I really only wanted to be sure that whatever we read would be primary sources, and they are.

Unit I deals with what Aztecs believed a woman had to do and be to be considered good or bad.

Unit II deals with what Spanish, Moorish, Indian, and Black women were actually doing in Mexico City, just after the Conquest.

Unit III deals with an individual writer in seventeenth-century Mexico, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. I think she was the greatest woman genius that Latin America ever produced.

The introduction to each unit deals with the sources, tries to clarify how they know what they know, and suggests some of their possible biases.

Each text is a translation from the original Nahuatl or Spanish.

"For Your Information" sections provide some comparisons, or some additional facts, or some strategies for handling the problems. If you find these sections irritating or useless, skip them. Interpret your way, from the primary sources.

"Questions for Reflection and Discussion" are just that. It is always very interesting to see how differently students interpret the same problem. Students are often not used to listening seriously to other students. That is a pity. How can we have a community of scholars unless everyone listens to everyone? Do not try to answer every question. Just work on the one (s) that interest you. You can trust each other. The community will cover the material when the individual cannot.

These are questions that try to prod and stimulate your mind. Other questions test your grasp of facts. I am deeply suspicious of and hostile to such questions. I stride into the room and in a booming voice pin a student to the wall: "Now, Miss Cándida, tell us the four ways the Aztecs flavored their hot chocolate?" At least three terrible results can occur. Miss Cándida can die of fright, right there in your classroom, because she studied very hard but she did not memorize that because who cares? Or Miss Cándida will answer correctly and forget it in two weeks. Or, if Miss Cándida is like me, she will remember the four ways all her life and take them to her grave as one more useless piece of information that school etched on an otherwise fine mind.

The questions for reflection do not test facts per se. They require you to

use facts in order to make your point. Whenever I write a numbered list of anything, I leave the final number blank:

(5)

That is because I know that other people find different questions more challenging and because, I confess, I think many students are smarter than I am. The best historians formulate and answer their own questions. Do that if you can.

At the end of every unit, when you have completed it the best you could, reward yourself. Take an evening off, go out to dinner, see a show, read a fun book. The teacher is armed with the evaluation, the grade, the comments. You must defend yourself by controlling other rewards. You must not let yourself depend entirely on the teacher for "how you did." If you do, you will never grow up to wear a black leather jacket with a snake eating an eagle on the back.

UNIT I: What the Aztec Woman Must Be and Do

INTRODUCTION

The primary source from which these selections were taken, the Florentine Codex, is one of the most fascinating sources in Mexican history. It represents the work of a sixteenth-century college class in Mexico City. The teacher was a Spanish priest, Fray Bernardino de Sahagún. He was a college graduate from the University of Salamanca in Spain. He came to Mexico in 1529 and taught himself to speak and read and write Nahuatl. The students of the Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlaltelolco were all Indian boys from noble Aztec families. Sahagún believed that if he could only understand the culture of the Aztecs--their religion, their myths, their songs, their history, the customs of their everyday life, their values--then priests could explain Christianity in Aztec terms and so persuade Aztecs to leave their old religion and become Catholics. This motive is extremely important. It shows that Aztecs were not eagerly converting to Christianity. And it shows that even a generation after the Conquest, Aztec society and culture were considered very potent forces by the Spanish minority. Some people today, afflicted by the racism of our society, accuse the Spaniards of treating the Aztecs as inferiors. Primary sources read differently: Spaniards were awed and impressed by the achievements and fighting spirit of the Aztecs.

The students of Tlaltelolco went out into the streets and plazas of Mexico City and asked wise old men a long series of questions. There is a rhythm to their answers. In the great oral tradition many gave answers they had memorized in school. The rhythm is a mnemonic device to help the person reciting to remember what comes next. Back in school, the boys and Sahagún wrote up their findings in three forms: (1) Aztec picture writing, (2) Nahuatl transcribed into our alphabet, and (3) Spanish. The project lasted from 1558 to 1566. Sahagún compiled the data and called the work Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España (1569). It is steeped in a sense of admiration and respect for the Aztec people. It provides our best image of the Aztec world at first contact. It narrates moving accounts by the Aztecs of their view of the conquest of Mexico.

The king of Spain hated it. He said it glorified a heathen religion. In 1577 he ordered all copies destroyed, in Spain and Mexico. Luckily, the Florentine

Codex survived.

The magnificent translation (from the Nahuatl directly into English) is the work of Charles Dibble and Arthur Anderson. They published the Florentine Codex in twelve books: (1) The Gods, (2) Ceremonies, (3) Origin of the Gods, (4) The Soothsayers, (5) The Omens, (6) Rhetoric, (7) Sun, Moon, Stars, and Binding the Year, (8) Kings and Lords, (9) Merchants and Craftsmen, (10) The People, (11) The Earthly Things--animals, plants, medicinal herbs, hallucinogens, (12) The Conquest of Mexico. The selection on women presented here is taken from Book 10, The People.

Opportunities for bias are very great in the Florentine Codex. All the informants, all the students, and the teacher/editor were men. These are women seen exclusively through the eyes of men. Anything that deals with Aztec religion and priesthood is potentially charged with emotional bias. For example, in the list of high-status occupations for men, there is no mention of priests. In the 1550s Aztec priests were persecuted, and Imperial Spain never allowed Indian men to become Christian priests. But before the Conquest, priest must have been a very high-status profession indeed. Similarly, there is no mention of teachers, though the Aztecs required all boys to go to school. Time shimmers and distorts, moving between precontact culture and the world of the second generation. However, the work of ordinary people seems to have continued serenely.

In general, the Florentine Codex shows an interest in two main questions about women. First, what must a woman do or be in order to be considered good or bad? The answer to such a question is called a prescription. (It has never been clear to me what a prescription actually is. Is it what men think women ought to do--and they do not, so the men preach a sermon? Or is it what women are doing anyway--and so the men reward them with praise?) The second question asks, What did women actually do? A class distinction clearly emerges. Prescription works best on the Lady, the noblewoman, the woman of the leisure class. Occupational descriptions best fit working women.

EXCERPTS FROM THE FLORENTINE CODEX
(Book 10, The People)

OCCUPATIONS OF MEN	OCCUPATIONS OF WOMEN
High-Status Professions	High-Status Professions
ruler	(none)
judge	
general	
warrior	
Professions	Professions
physician	physician
storyteller	
singer	
scribe	
sorcerer	
attorney	
Perverse Professions	Perverse Professions
pimp	procuress (madam)
thief	prostitute
highwayman	
murderer	
Merchant/Vendors	Merchant/Vendors
tortilla/tamale seller	tortilla/tamale seller
retailer	blue dye seller (clay & leaves)
peddler	bird owner/feather seller
slave dealer	herb seller
seller of jewelry (stone, jade, pearls, opals)	atole seller
seller of gold trinkets	hot chocolate seller
obsidian seller	
feather seller	
foreign seller	
seller of cotton capes	
seller of maguey fiber capes	
sandal maker	
palm leaf cape seller	
seller of rabbit fur	
seller of gourd bowls	
reed mat seller	
basket seller	
copper seller (needles, axes, fishhooks)	
rubber seller	
broom seller	
resin seller	
liquid amber seller	
pipe seller	
tobacco seller	
candlemaker	
gold bag seller	
sash seller	
saltpeter seller (for tortillas)	
chocolate dealer	
corn seller	
bean seller	
amaranth seed seller	
medicine seller	
chía seller	

EXCERPTS FROM THE FLORENTINE CODEX (continued)

OCCUPATIONS OF MEN	OCCUPATIONS OF WOMEN
Merchant/Vendors (continued)	
amaranth seed seller	
medicine seller	
chía seller	
tomato seller	
gourd seed seller	
egg seller	
turkey seller	
honey seller	
dark maguey syrup seller	
Rural Producer	
farmer	
Craftsmen	Craftswomen
featherworker	featherworker
goldworker	spinner
copper caster	weaver
lapidary	cook
carpenter	
stonecutter	
mason	
tailor	
potter	

THE DEPORTMENT OF NOBLEWOMEN

A Noblewoman

A noble person [is] wonderful, revered, esteemed, respected; a shelter.

The good noblewoman [is] a protector*--one who loves, who guards people. She protects, loves, guards one.

The bad noblewoman [is] violent, furious, savage, revolting--a respecter of no one. She respects no one; she belittles, brags, becomes presumptuous; she takes things in jest and keeps them; she appropriates things; she deceives herself. [P. 45]

[Another] Noblewoman

The noblewoman [is] completely good, just, pure, respectable.

The good noblewoman [is] one who humbles herself, who bows in reverence. Gracious, kind, she is benign, persuasive; she bows in reverence; she is humble, appreciative.

The bad noblewoman [is] untrained, deranged, disobedient, pompous. She goes about dissolute, brazen. She is gaudy; she goes about in gaudy raiment--rude, drunk. [P. 48]

[Another] Noblewoman

The noblewoman [is] of nobility, belongs to the order of rulers, comes from rulership whether she is legitimate or a bastard child.

The good noblewoman [is] one who is bashful, ashamed [of evil], who does things with timidity, who is embarrassed [by evil]. She is embarrassed [by evil]; she works willingly, voluntarily.

The bad noblewoman [is] infamous, very audacious, stern, proud, very stupid, brazen, besotted, drunk. She goes about besotted; she goes about demented; she goes about eating mushrooms. [P. 49]

[Another] Noblewoman

The noblewoman [is] a protector, meritorious of obedience, revered, worthy of being obeyed; a taker of responsibilities, a bearer of burdens--famed, venerable, renowned.

The good noblewoman [is] patient, gentle, kind, benign, hard-working, resolute, firm of heart, willing as a worker, well disposed, careful of her estate. She governs, leads, provides for one, arranges well, administers peacefully.

The bad noblewoman [is] one who is rash, who is fitful. She incites riots; she arouses fear, implants fear, spreads fear; she terrorizes [as if] she ate people. She impels flight--causes havoc--among people. She squanders. [P. 46]

The Maiden

The maiden is noble, a noble among nobles, a child of nobility. [She is one] from whom noble lineage issues, or she is of noble birth, worthy of being loved, worthy of preferred treatment.

The good maiden is yet a virgin, mature, clean, unblemished, pious, pure of heart, benign, chaste, candid, well disposed. She is benign; she loves; she shows reverence; she is peaceful; she bows in reverence; she is humble, reserved; she speaks well, calmly.

The bad maiden [is] a descendant of commoners--a belittler, a rude person, of lowly birth. She acts like a commoner; she is furious, hateful, dishonored, dissolute, given to carnal pleasure, impetuous. [P. 46]

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* Lit., "one who spreads her wings, her tail feathers over one."

THE DEPORTMENT OF ORDINARY WOMEN

The Robust Woman

The robust woman, the middle-aged woman [is] strong, rugged, energetic, wiry, very tough--exceedingly tough, animated, vigorous; a willing worker, long-suffering.

The good robust woman [is] pious, chaste, careful of her honor; not unclean; unblemished; one who is irreproachable--like a bracelet, like a green stone, like fine turquoise.

The evil robust woman [is] belittling and offensive to others--belittling to others; disgusting. She is ill bred, incompatible; she does not work in calm; she acts fitfully, without consideration; she is impetuous. [P. 51]

The Mature Woman

The mature woman [is] candid.

The good mature woman [is] resolute, firm of heart; constant--not to be dismayed; brave, like a man; vigorous, resolute; persevering--not one to falter; a steadfast, resolute worker. She is long-suffering; she accepts reprimands calmly--endures things like a man. She becomes firm--takes courage. She is intent. She gives of herself. She goes in humility. She exerts herself.

The bad mature woman [is] thin, tottering, weak--an inconstant companion, unfriendly. She annoys others, chagrins them, embarrasses, shames, oppresses one. Extremely feeble, impatient, chagrined, exhausted, fretful, she becomes impatient, loses hope, becomes embarrassed--chagrined. She goes about in shame; she persists in evil. Evil is her life. She lives in vice. [P. 51]

ORDINARY WOMEN: OCCUPATIONS

The Weaver of Designs

The weaver of designs is one who concerns herself with using thread, who works with thread.

The good weaver of designs is skilled--a maker of varicolored capes, an outliner of designs, a blender of colors, a joiner of pieces, a matcher of pieces, a person of good memory. She does things dexterously. She weaves designs. She selects. She weaves tightly. She forms borders. She forms the neck. She uses an uncompressed weave. She makes capes with the ball-court and tree design.* She weaves loosely--a loose, thick thread. She provides a metal weft. She forms the design with the sun on it.

The bad weaver of designs is untrained--silly, foolish, unobservant, unskilled of hand, ignorant, stupid. She tangles [the thread]; she harms [her work]--she spoils it. She ruins things scandalously; she scandalously ruins the surface of things. [P. 52]

[The Weaver]

The weaver [is] one who warps, presses the treadle with her feet, puts the weft in place, provides the heddle. [She is] a possessor of heddle leashes, a provider of heddle leashes.

The good weaver [is] one who presses down [what she weaves], beats it, picks, [the thread] with a thorn; who weaves loosely, weaves tightly. She makes it tight, compresses it, beats it down; she warps, provides the heddles, provides the leashes, she places the template--inserts it; she puts the weft in place--extends it; she twists [the thread]. She weaves; she directs others in weaving.

The bad weaver [is] lazy, indolent--a nonchalant, sullen worker; a deceiver. She mauls [her weaving; she is] one who makes gouges in it with her thorn, cuts it in her impatience, makes it look like a corncob; who makes it loose--weaves loosely--is a loose weaver. She works nonchalantly, sullenly; she mocks one. A thief, she pilfers. [P. 36]

The Spinner

The spinner [is] one who combs, who shakes out [the cotton].

The good spinner [is] one who handles things delicately, who forms an even thread. [She is] soft, skilled of hand--of craftsman's hands. She puts [the thread] in her lap; she fills the spindle; she makes a ball [of thread]; she takes it into her hand--winds it into a skein in her hands. She triples [the thread]. She spins a loose, thick thread.

The bad spinner pulls [threads], leaves lumps, moistens what she grasps with her lips, twists incompletely. [She is] useless--of useless hands, negligent, slothful, neglectful--a neglectful one, lazy. [P. 52]

The Spinner

The spinner, the spindle-user [is] one who unravels well, who unsews.

The good spinner [is] one who forms a thread of even thickness, who stretches it delicately. She puts it in her lap. She fills the spindle, stretches [the thread] about the spindle, winds the thread into a ball--with her hand she takes it; she shapes it into a skein. She is persevering and diligent; she works delicately.

The bad spinner [is] a spinner of lumpy thread, of uneven thread, a puller of threads--one who extends them loosely, who twists them poorly. She twists them poorly, spins knots, extends [the thread] loosely, forms it unevenly. [She is] useless of hand, overbold, weak of body, dull; she is lazy; she constantly drops things. [P. 35]

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* Siméon (citing Clavijero) describes this as the costume of military officers in the court.

The Seamstress

The seamstress is one who uses the needle, a needle worker. She sews; she makes designs.

The good seamstress [is] a craftsman, of craftsman's hands, of skilled hands--a resourceful, meditative woman. She makes designs; she sews.

The bad seamstress [is] one who bastes, who tangles [thread]. She tangles [thread]; she bastes; she tangles the sewing. She deceives one; she ridicules one. [P. 52]

[The Tortilla Seller]

The tortilla seller, the food seller [is] an owner of tortillas or a retailer. He* sells meat tamales, turkey pasties, plain tamales, barbecued tamales, those cooked in an olla--they burn within; grains of maize with chili, tamales with chili, burning within; fish tamales, fish with grains of maize, frog tamales, frog with grains of maize, axolotl with grains of maize, axolotl tamales, tadpoles with grains of maize, mushrooms with grains of maize, tuna cactus with grains of maize, rabbit tamales, rabbit with grains of maize, gopher tamales: tasty--tasty, very tasty, very well made, always tasty, savory, of pleasing odor, of very pleasing odor; made with a pleasing odor, very savory. Where [it is] tasty, [it has] chili, salt, tomatoes, gourd seeds: shredded, crumbled, juiced.

He sells tamales of maize softened in wood ashes, the water of tamales, tamales of maize softened in lime--narrow tamales, fruit tamales, cooked bean tamales; cooked beans with grains of maize, cracked beans with grains of maize; broken, cracked grains of maize. [He sells] salted wide tamales, pointed tamales, white tamales, fast foods, roll-shaped tamales, tamales with beans forming a seashell on top, [with] grains of maize thrown in; crumbled, pounded tamales; spotted tamales, pointed tamales, white fruit tamales, red fruit tamales, turkey egg tamales; turkey eggs with grains of maize; tamales of tender maize, tamales of green maize, adobe-shaped tamales, braised ones; unleavened tamales, honey tamales, beeswax tamales, tamales with grains of maize, gourd tamales, crumbled tamales, maize flower tamales.

The bad food seller [is] he who sells filthy tamales, discolored tamales--broken, tasteless, quite tasteless, inedible, frightening, deceiving; tamales made of chaff, swollen tamales, spoiled tamales, foul tamales--sticky, gummy; old tamales, cold tamales--dirty and sour, very sour, exceedingly sour, stinking.

The food seller sells tortillas which [are] thick, thickish, thick overall, extremely thick; he sells thin [ones]--thin tortillas, stretched-out tortillas: disc-like, straight . . ., with shelled beans, cooked shelled beans, uncooked shelled beans; with shelled beans mashed, chili with maize, tortillas with meat and grains of maize, folded, doubled over, doubled over and salted, doubled over with chili, wrapped with chili--chili-wrapped, gathered in the hand; ashen tortillas, washed tortillas.

He sells folded tortillas, thick tortillas, coarse tortillas. He sells tortillas with turkey eggs, tortillas made with honey, pressed ones, glove-shaped tortillas, unleavened tortillas, assorted ones, braised ones, sweet tortillas, amaranth seed tortillas, gourd tortillas, green maize tortillas, adobe-shaped tortillas, tuna cactus tortillas; broken, crumbled, old tortillas; cold tortillas, toasted ones, dried tortillas, stinking tortillas.

He sells foods, sauces, hot sauces; fried [food], olla-cooked [food], juices, sauces of juices, shredded [food] with chili, with gourd seeds, with tomatoes, with smoked chili, with hot chilis, with yellow chilis, with mild red chilis, with an early variety of chili, with green chilis, with large tomatoes. [He sells] roasted [meat], barbecued meat, barbecue sauce, chili sauce, mild red chili sauce, yellow chili sauce, hot chili sauce, sauce of an early variety of chili, sauce of smoked chilis, heated [sauces], bean sauce; [he sells] toasted beans, cooked beans, mushroom sauce, sauce of small gourds, sauce of large tomatoes, sauce of ordinary tomatoes, sauce of various kinds of sorrel, avocado sauce--hot, very hot, very glistening-hot, glistening-hot, extremely glistening-hot, most hot; salted, salty, very salty, ex-

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* The corresponding Spanish text opens referring to a woman "la que es official," but subsequent references are to males. The illustration, however, is of a woman.

tremely salty, very salt, bitter with salt, very bitter with salt, most bitter with salt. . . . [Pp. 69-70]

The Cook

The cook is one who makes sauces, who makes tortillas; who kneads [dough]; who makes things acid, who leavens. [She is] wiry, energetic. [She is] a maker of tortillas--a tortilla-maker; she makes them disc-shaped, thin, long. . . . She makes them into balls; twisted tortillas--twisted about chili; she uses grains of maize. She makes tamales--meat tamales; she makes cylindrical tortillas; she makes thick, coarse ones. She dilutes sauces; she cooks; she fries; she makes juices. [P. 52]

[The Cook]

The good cook is honest, discreet; [she is] one who likes good food--an epicure, a taster [of food. She is] clean, one who bathes herself; prudent; one who washes her hands, who washes herself; who has good drink, good food.

The bad cook [is] dishonest, detestable, nauseating, offensive to others--sweaty, crude, gluttonous, stuffed, distended with food--much distended, acquisitive. As one who puts dough into the oven, she puts it into the oven. She smokes the food; she makes it very salty, briny; she sours it. She is a field hand--very much a field hand, very much a commoner. [P. 53]

[The Atole Seller]

The atole seller sells hot atole; thick, white atole; atole of maize cooked in lime; atole of raw ground maize; bean atole, toasted maize atole, fruit atole, chili atole, black atole; tortilla atole, boiled chili atole; atole treated with lime, atole with honey.

She sells cold atole, pinole, wrinkled chía, amaranth pinole. The good [is] smooth, thick; the bad [is] overflowing, clotted. It has things on top: chili on top, honey on top. [P. 93]

The Seller of Fine Chocolate

The seller of fine chocolate [is] one who grinds, who provides people with drink, with repasts. She grinds cacao [beans]; she crushes, breaks, pulverizes them. She chooses, selects, separates them. She drenches, soaks, steeps them. She adds water sparingly, conservatively; aerates it, filters it, strains it, pours it back and forth, aerates it; she makes it form a head, makes it foam; she removes the head, makes it thicken, makes it dry, pours water in, stirs water into it.

She sells good, superior, potable [chocolate]: the privilege, the drink of nobles, of rulers--finely ground, soft, foamy, reddish, bitter; [with] chili water, with flowers, with uei nacaztli, with teonacaztli, with vanilla, with mecaxochitl, with wild bee honey, with powdered aromatic flowers. [Inferior chocolate has] maize flour and water; lime water; [it is] pale; the [froth] bubbles burst. [It is chocolate] with water added--Chontal water . . . [fit for] water flies. [P. 93]

[Specialty Sellers]

The blue dye seller dyes one. [She is] a seller of black clay [which] dyes one--a gatherer of clay. She carries clay on her back [to] dye one, [to] dye objects. She mixes it with uixachin [leaves,] with quauhtepoztli [bark]. She sells black clay, ordinary clay, with uixachin [leaves], with quauhtepoztli [bark]. [Pp. 91-92]

The feather seller [is] a bird owner. She raises birds; she plucks them. She plucks feathers; she treats them with chalk. She plucks feathers from the back and the breast; she peels downy feathers. She spins split ones. She spins feathers--spins them into an even thread, trims them. She spins them loosely, she spins them firmly; she uses the spindle, turns them loosely about the spindle, turns them firmly about the spindle.

She sells soft, spun [feathers]; long, even thread--trimmed, loose, loosely woven; white feathers, tail feathers, chick feathers, back and breast feathers, darkened ones, brown ones; goose feathers, domestic duck feathers, Peru duck feathers, wild duck feathers, turkey feathers--black, white, yellow, bright red, tawny, carmine colored. [P. 92]

The herb seller is a producer of herbs, a field worker, a plucker of herbs. She plucks greens; she produces herbs. [P. 92]

The Physician

The physician [is] a knower of herbs, of roots, of trees, of stones; she is experienced in these. [She is] one who has [the results of] examinations; she is a woman of experience, of trust, of professional skill: a counselor.

The good physician is a restorer, a provider of health, a reviver, a relaxer--one who makes people feel well, who envelopes one in ashes. She cures people; she provides them health; she lances them, she bleeds them--bleeds them in various places, pierces them with an obsidian lancet. She gives them potions, purges them, gives them medicine. She cures disorders of the anus. She anoints them; she rubs, she massages them. She provides them splints; she sets their bones--she sets a number of bones. She makes incisions, treats one's festering, one's gout, one's eyes. She cuts [growths from] one's eyes.

The bad physician [pretends to be] a counselor, advised, a person of trust, of professional knowledge. She has a vulva, a crushed vulva, a friction-loving vulva. [She is] a doer of evil. She bewitches--a sorceress, a person of sorcery, a possessed one. She makes one drink potions, kills people with medications, causes them to worsen, endangers them, increases sickness, makes them sick, kills them. She deceives people, ridicules them, seduces them, perverts them, bewitches them, blows [evil] upon them, removes an object from them, sees their fate in water, reads their fate with cords, casts lots with grains of maize, draws worms from their teeth. She draws paper--flint--obsidian--worms from them; she removes these from them. She deceives them, perverts them, makes them believe. [P. 53]

The Harlot; The Carnal Woman

The carnal woman is an evil woman who finds pleasure in her body; who sells her body--repeatedly sells her body; an evil young woman [or] an evil old woman, besotted, drunk--very drunk, much besotted; dejected, perverse; [like] a sacrificial victim, a bathed slave, a captive; full of affliction, mortal.

She consumes her inner substance--a brazen, a proud, a dissolute woman of debauched life; a fraud--gaudy, fastidious, vain, petty. [She is] oblivious of what all know her to be: a petty old woman, a free yielder of herself, a whore from the brothel, a deflowered one, a lascivious old woman; of itching buttocks--an old woman of itching buttocks; an aged woman, a flabby old woman, a filthy one; a filthy old dog who brings herself to ruin like a dog.

She parades; she moves lasciviously; she is pompous. Wheresoever she seduces, howsoever she sets her heart [on one], she brings him to ruin. She makes herself beautiful; she arrays herself; she is haughty. She appears like a flower, looks gaudy, arrays herself gaudily; she views herself in a mirror--carries a mirror in her hand. She bathes; she takes a sweat bath; she washes herself; she anoints herself with axin--constantly anoints herself with axin. She lives like a bathed slave, acts like a sacrificial victim; she goes about with her head high--rude, drunk, shameless--eating mushrooms. She paints her face, variously paints her face; her face is covered with rouge, her cheeks are colored, her teeth are darkened--rubbed with cochineal. [Half] of her hair falls loose, half is wound about her head. She arranges her hair like horns.

She goes about haughtily, shamelessly--head high, vain, filthy, given to pleasure. She lives in vice.

She perfumes herself, casts incense about her, uses rose water. She uses the poyomatli herb. She chews chicle--she clacks chicle. She lives on the water--in the streets; she goes about disgracing the streets, frequenting the market place, as if a part of the market place.

She promenades; she goes about pushing. She pushes; she insults; she goes about insulting; she goes about constantly merry, ever on the move, wandering here and there, never coming to repose, unquiet, restless, flighty. Her heart is constantly throbbing; she follows the wide road, goes the way of the rabbit, the deer.

She is a pretender, a fraud. She waves her hand at one, gestures with her head, makes eyes at one, closes one eye at one, winks, beckons with her head, summons with the hand, turns her face. She laughs--goes about laughing; she vomits--vomits constantly; she drinks wine; she is drunk--she constantly drinks wine. She is covetous; she becomes wealthy. She woos; she wishes to be coveted; she makes herself desirable. She goes about making a fool of one--deceiving one. She is importunate. She is a procuress; she goes about procuring, selling persons, providing prostitutes, corrupting others. [P. 56]

The Procuress; [The Woman] Who Procures

The procuress is verily a demon. [The devil] truly dwells within her, truly hides within her. Hers is truly the disguise of the demon of the air, of the devil. The deceiver is really the eyes, the ears--the messenger--of the devil, of the demon of the air.

This aforementioned one [is] a deceiver, a perverter, a provoker, a deranger, a corrupter, a destroyer of others. [She is] flowery of speech, gentle of words, mellifluous of speech; an agreeable talker, mild soft-spoken. Her language [is] delicate, sweet, pleasing. [She is] adroit, skilled in speech. [She is] a fraud who lulls one with words, who wheedles. She entices one; [she is] a cajoler, a spell-casting robber, . . ., who converses deceitfully, ruins by sorcery, performs trickery. She strings out lengthy discourses, converses deceitfully, wheedles; she lulls one with words; she deranges, provokes, perverts, corrupts, mocks one; she induces one--induces one with deceit; she robs one by casting a spell; she cajoles one. [P. 57]

[The Procuress]

The procuress is one who procures. She is of a house [of ill fame]. Gentle of words, [she is] a corrupter, an inducer. She induces, seduces with words, incites others. Adroit of language, skilled of speech, she is a fraud. She acts as a procuress. She receives guests. She secures recompense, payment from others. She robs one--she constantly robs one. [P. 94]

[The Prostitute]

The prostitute, the woman who sells herself, who repeatedly sells herself, [is] a harlot, destitute, besotted, drunk, gaudy, vain, filthy; a perverted woman. She ornaments herself well, places herself at the market, adorns herself at the market place; she adorns herself; she is pompous.

She sells her body, her flesh, her heritage, her possession, her vulva--an evil woman, proud, very proud. [She is] a little girl, a small girl, then a pleasing little one, a pleasing young woman, a maiden, a wretched maiden; an old woman, a wretched old woman, a little old woman, a corrupt old woman. Restless on the water, living on the water, she is flighty; she travels along the road--travels shamefully along the road; she walks as if a part of the market place; she walks painted in the market place. She walks back and forth many times along the road; she walks circling, constantly. She nowhere finds lodging. She settles anywhere, she sleeps anywhere, she [wakes at] dawn anywhere. In any manner whatsoever night [and] day overtake her. [P. 94]

The Scandalous Woman

The scandalous woman is an adulteress, a practiser of adultery. [She merits] laughter, ridicule, sneers, mockery. She is nameless, fameless--[as if] dead, deceased. [She is] a bearer of bastards, an aborter. No one deals with her. She commits adultery; she practises adultery. She cheats, deceives, blinds [her husband]. [P. 56]

The Hermaphrodite

The hermaphrodite is a detestable woman, a woman who has a penis, a [virile] arrow, testes; who takes female companions, female friends; who provides herself with young women, who has young women. She has man's body, man's build, man's speech. She goes about like a man. She is bearded, she has fine body hair, she has coarse body hair. She has carnal relations with other women; she takes female companions. She never desires a husband; she hates, detests men exceedingly; she scandalizes. [P. 56]

SUBSTANCES

Bitumen (Pitch, Asphalt)

Bitumen [is] black, very black black; [it is] that which flakes, crumbles, breaks up. It comes from the ocean, from the sea; it is produced within the ocean. When it comes forth, [it is] according to the time count. The waves cast it forth. It comes forth, it drops out according to the phase of the moon. When it comes forth, [it is] like a mat, wide, thick. Those of the seashore, those of the coast lands gather it there. They gather it, they pick it up from the sand.

The bitumen [is] fragrant, of pleasing scent; its scent, its odor [is] precious. When it is exposed to the fire, when it is cast in the fire, its scent spreads over the whole land.

Bitumen is used for two [purposes]. The first [purpose] for which it is used is to be mixed with pulverized tobacco, so that the pulverized tobacco may be made pleasing. The pleasing scent of the tobacco with bitumen spreads over the whole land. As its second use, it is used by women; they chew the bitumen. And what they chew [is] named chicle. They do not chew it alone; they provide it with axin.* They mix it with axin. It cannot be chewed alone; it crumbles. And in this manner it is improved: axin is provided, axin is mixed in, so that it is softened, smoothed.

And the chewing of chicle [is] the preference, the privilege of the little girls, the small girls, the young women. Also the mature women, the unmarried women use it; and all the women who [are] unmarried chew chicle in public.

One's wife also chews chicle, but not in public. Also the widowed and the old women do not, in public. But the bad women, those called harlots, [show] no fine feelings; quite publicly they go about chewing chicle along the roads, in the market place, clacking like castanets. Other women who constantly chew chicle in public achieve the attributes of evil women.

For this reason the women chew chicle: because thereby they cause their saliva to flow and thereby the mouths are scented; the mouth is given a pleasing taste. With it they dispel the bad odor of their mouths, or the bad smell of their teeth. Thus they chew chicle in order not to be detested. The men also chew chicle to cause their saliva to flow and to clean the teeth, but this very secretly--never in public.

The chewing of chicle [is] the real privilege of the addicts termed "effeminates." [It is] as if it were their privilege, their birthright. And the men who publicly chew chicle achieve the status of sodomites; they equal the effeminates.

The bitumen is mixed with copal, with liquidambar. With these there is incensing, there is perfuming.

THE AXIN [is] yellow, very yellow, quite yellow, pulverized, soft, viscid, hot. This axin [is] an insect. Thus is it engendered: it settles on the tree named axquauitl. A little insect like a fly settles on it; then it eats the leaves of the axquauitl. It lays its eggs on it; there they hatch in countless numbers. When they have enlarged, have become well rounded, then the inhabitants shake them off. They then are boiled in an olla. When they are cooked, they break open their shells. Something just like wool, like flour, comes out. Then they wrap it in maize husks.

The essence of axin [is] hot; they say [it is] like fire. The traveler anoints himself with it in order that the cold will not oppress him exceedingly. Where the sickness named the gout occurs, wherever it is, [axin] is spread on. It soothes [the gout]. In order that frost will not injure the lips, an axin unguent is applied; it is spread on the lips. It is said, axin is applied to the lips. This is not used alone as a cure for gout; it is mixed with the herb called colotzitzicaztli. In order for this axin to serve as an unguent, to be used as an unguent, lampblack is

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* Coccus axin: "axi, axin or aje, an oily yellowish substance which is produced by a scale insect of the same name upon the branches of Jatropha curcas, Spondias, and other trees"--Paul C. Standley: "Trees and Shrubs of Mexico," Contributions from the United States National Herbarium (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1923), Vol. 23, Pt. 3, p. 641.

added; thus one does not go on constantly applying an unguent.

This axin [is] a remedy for diarrhea. When someone cannot stop his diarrhea, when he has diarrhea just like water, axin is boiled. And when it has cooled, when [it is] tepid, it is given as an enema to one who has diarrhea. It is thus cured; his diarrhea is thus stopped.

THE MOUNTAIN CHICLE, or wild chicle, is just like [ordinary] chicle. It is also chewed. As it is chewed, [it is] like beeswax. It does not sicken one; it does not give one a headache. [It is] very pleasing and sweet. But the [other] chicle, when it is chewed, tires one's head; it gives one a headache. The mountain chicle is an herb; [the substance] is extracted from its root. [Pp. 88-90]

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Defining the historical Lady in the United States may help you illuminate her differences from the Aztec Lady. Barbara Welter in "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860" (American Quarterly 18, Summer 1966, 151-174) read women's magazines, gift books, religious tracts, cookbooks, diaries, and autobiographies, all published in the Northern United States. She discovered that the ideal woman was WEAK (delicate, frail, timid), DEPENDENT (on her husband and children for her identity), PIOUS (religious and morally superior to men), DOMESTIC, and PURE. For such a woman it was "better to pray than think." Women who tried to think and pursue an independent career were bad. They were called "mental hermaphrodites."

For the Southern Lady (1830-1870), Anne Firor Scott (The Southern Lady, From Pedestal to Politics, 1970) read much of the same kinds of prescriptive sources Welter did--plus plantation records. The ideal Southern Lady was WEAK (fragile, innocent, modest, illogical). She was STRONG in intuition and fascination. She was strong because she suffered in silence, because she practiced self-control, because she was a paragon of pious spirituality. She was DOMESTIC: "an angel in the house." Ladies who failed were unsexed, unloved, and rejected. In wartime the Ladies took over the work of their husbands. They were planters, accountants, manufacturers, millers, merchants, and government clerks. Only in times of crisis were Ladies allowed to be ACTIVE and competent--but even then, only in the service of others.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. What class distinctions can you find that distinguish the good noblewoman from the good ordinary woman, the bad noblewoman from the bad ordinary woman? What do you conclude?

2. Which of the Aztec values defining good and bad seem odd and foreign to you? Which seem familiar to you? Which do you think is stronger, the strangeness of different culture, time, and place? Or the conventional force of sex role expectations?

3. Review the table of occupations. Which had more opportunities to earn a living, noblewomen or ordinary women? Men or women?

4. Describe an ideal noblewoman; an ideal working woman; a bad woman. Are Aztec ideals for women like ours? Does our society have different ideals for working women and for Ladies? How would you describe a bad American woman?

5. In 1971 Mirta Vidal, speaking for Chicanas, wrote her version of the historical roles of Indian women before the Conquest:

> Before the Europeans came to this part of the world, women enjoyed a position of equality with men. The submission of women, along with institutions such as the church and the patriarchy, was imported by the European colonizers.

Chicana activists, seeking to be liberated, grasp at the past for models for a new identity. You have read the Florentine Codex, the best primary source we have on Aztec women. In what sense is Vidal's statement "women enjoyed a position of equality with men" real and true? In what sense is it false and misleading? What do you conclude? (Reference: Mirta Vidal, "Chicanas Speak Out: Women: New Voice of La Raza," International Socialist Review, October 1971).

6.

UNIT II: The Women of Mexico City:

Sixteenth Century

INTRODUCTION

The question is, What exactly were women doing in Mexico City just after the Conquest? What kind of women were they? What legal rights and privileges did they enjoy?

The great Aztec city of Tenochtitlán fell to the Spaniards and their Indian allies in 1521. The behavior described in these primary sources occurred during the years 1525-1528 and 1536-1538.

Notary records probe to the basalt of people's everyday lives, their comings and goings, their wheelings and dealings. Perhaps you should share with each other your experiences with notaries public. Your list would have to be greatly expanded to match colonial Mexican notary activities. In this early period there were very few institutions. There were no banks. All financial transactions occurred between people, and all those transactions were made legally binding before a notary. Too, since there was no national post office, all postal money orders and all transatlantic commercial ventures were confirmed before a notary.

The editors, A. Millares Carlo and J. I. Mantecón, extracted these accounts from the yellow, tattered pages of bound volumes of the notary records, which are stored in an old convent in Mexico City. In their two volumes are all the records for early Mexico City; there are no others. The years that are missing, are missing, perhaps lost, perhaps destroyed. This is how the two men summed up the importance of these records:

> In their totality they represent the basic interests of the conquerors and first settlers. An obsession with traffic and commerce propels all their activities. From the highest to the lowest, all are caught up in this atmosphere; conquerors or clerics, college graduates or artisans, mayors, aldermen, surgeons, muleteers appear in these registers as singleminded in their efforts to better their lot, preoccupied with creating for themselves a position which would reward them for the hardships of conquest or materialize the hopes with which they left Spain to risk their lives in America. [P. 20]

Do you detect a sex bias in that paragraph?

In spite of it, the records themselves are objective, and, incredibly, they

prove that women were active in the public sphere. There is no bias in these notary records. The notary does not care much about the sex of the client. Wills and powers deal with business and private property, not sex. The editors did not transcribe exactly what they read. Notaries were rambling and long-winded. Instead, they summarized them, being careful to include the important data in each citation. I simply selected every reference that dealt with women and then discarded the repetitive ones and the ones that did not say anything interesting. These notary records are distinctly a primary source. The material you read is speaking to you directly through the passage of 450 years. There is no intermediary.

EXTRACTS FROM THE NOTARY RECORDS

Source: A. Millares Carlo and J. I. Mantecón, Indice y extractos de los protocolos del Archivo de Notarías de México, D. F. (2 vols. Mexico City: Centro de Estudios Históricos, El Colegio de México, 1945.)

Vol I. Notary: Juan Fernández de Castillo. 1525-1528.

10. 14 August 1525. Diego López Pacheco, resident of Tenochtitlán, son of don Luis López Pacheco and doña Ana [?], residents of the city of Cuenca [Spain], states that he has received 5,000 ducats in gold as a dowry for his forthcoming marriage to doña Felipa de Araujo, daughter of María de Araujo, resident of Tenochtitlán. Witnessed by Fray Toribio de Benavente, Motolinía, guardian of the Franciscan monastery of this city.

68. 18 September 1525. Divorce petition. Felipa de Araujo, widow of Cristóbal de Olid [one of Cortés's captains in the conquest of Mexico], herself a resident of Tenochtitlán, gives power of attorney to Juan de la Peña, being in Tenochtitlán, to present himself before the reverend father Fray Toribio de Benavente, Motolinía, guardian of the monastery of San Francisco and apostolic judge, and before any other court, ecclesiastical or secular, to swear that "I am not responsible for debts charged to me by don Diego López Pacheco and to demand that my dowry be returned, since he deceived me and our marriage is illegal, since has a living wife in Castile, and our marriage should never have occurred."

1297. 28 April 1528. Alonso de Villanueva, resident of Tenochtitlán, acknowledges that María de Araujo, resident of this city, sold him some houses on Calle Tacuba, bordered on one side by the houses of Francisco Alvarez, and on the other by those of Juan Juárez, and by the royal road in front, for 200 pesos in gold, by a document sworn before public scribe Pedro de Castillo. But the contract is null and void, "for I lent her said 200 pesos, and she has given them back."

81. 22 September 1525. Gonzalo de Llereno, tailor, son of Hernando Ferro, native of Ecija [Spain], husband of María de Santaella, daughter of Juan de Ribera and of Mayor Gómez, declares that he has received from his mother-in-law, Mayor Gómez, as dowry, 400 pesos in gold.

88. 26 September 1525. Francisco Velázquez, resident of Tenochtitlán, owes Elvira López, being in said city, 67 pesos in gold for "a velvet cloak and some money that she lent to me in such a kind and loving way."

92. 27 September 1525. Acknowledgment of a debt of 80 gold pesos for merchandise made by Alvaro Gallegos to Elvira López, both of Tenochtitlán.

156. Francisco Velázquez, being in Tenochtitlán, owes to Elvira López, resident of Tenochtitlán, 130 pesos in gold for clothing purchased and received.

104. 3 October 1525. Alvaro Gallego sells to Antonio de Segovia, being in Tenochtitlán, "an Indian slave woman named Salinilla, branded with the King's brand and with letters on her face which spell "Gallardo," which woman has fled and escaped my control, and I sell her to you at your own risk (but if she does not return, at no obligation), for 17 pesos and 6 tomines of gold . . ., the value of one arroba [25 pounds] of fruit, half glazed almonds and half glazed fruits, which I received from you and which are in my power."

120. 9 October 1525. Beatriz Méndez, resident of Tenochtitlán and widow of Alonso Pérez, gives power of attorney to Miguel de Santo Domingo, resident of that city, and Juan de la Peña to demand the delivery of properties worth 1,550 pesos in gold, her dower rights to her deceased husband's estate. The dowry was sworn to before Fernando de Villanueva, November 5, 1523.

125. 12 October 1525. Power of attorney. Alonso Rodríguez, muleteer, being in New Spain, to Antón de Bruselas, resident of Trinidad on the Isla Fernandina, to redeem, from whoever has her, "a roan mare with white stockings and a blaze, its left ear notched, and two foals . . . and similarly the power to receive and have for his own, from Francisco Márquez, resident of said village of Trinidad, or wherever she may be, an Indian servant woman of mine, by force, and her son by a Christian."

184. 4 November 1525. "By this document let all men know that I, María de Marcayda, widow of Diego Xuárez, now deceased, being in this city of Tenochtitlán of this New Spain, grant power of attorney to my son Juan Xuárez, resident of said city, to collect and receive in court as well as without, from all the persons who are my debtors, all the money and gold and jewels and silver and real property, and any other property, that Catalina Xuárez, my daughter and wife that was of Hernán Cortés, governor that was of this New Spain, she now being deceased, my share as her mother and legitimate heiress. Saturday, November 4, the year of our savior Jesus Christ 1525, and because I do not know how to write, I do not sign my name."

222. 16 November 1525. Isabel de Ojeda, wife of Antonio de Villarroel, alguacil mayor and resident of Tenochtitlán, gives power of attorney to Juan Volante, resident of Veracruz, to collect from Alonso Díaz, or from whoever has her, "my female black slave Catalina and her baby, who is mine and belongs to me."

267. 28 November 1525. Cristóbal Pacheco designates as his universal heiress

his daughter Beatriz Pacheco and names her husband Bernadino de Santa Lara and Father Pedro Gutiérrez de Villagra executors of this estate.

320. 31 January 1527. Domingo García, resident of Tenochtitlán, grants authority to Dr. Cristóbal de Ojeda, being in this city, to collect from Antón de Carmona, also there, 225 pesos in gold that he may keep for himself as the price of a white woman slave whom García bought from Ojeda.

326. 1 February 1527. Pedro González de Trujillo, resident of Tenochtitlán, confers legal authority to Blas de Monterroso, also resident, to claim from Governor Hernán Cortés or his legal representative an Indian servant from these lands, "named Marina, who used to belong to Blas de Monterroso and who escaped from me, and when she is apprehended, you will take and have her as your own."

363. 12 February 1527. Isabel Rodríguez, wife of Miguel Rodríguez de Guadalupe, herself a resident of Tenochtitlán, swears that she owes to Leonor de Espíndola, being in this same city, 24 pesos in gold, the price of 6 arrobas of wool.

763. 11 September 1527. Last will and testament of Isabel Rodríguez, wife of Miguel Rodríguez de Guadalupe, resident of Tenochtitlán: "I owe to García Peres, my compadre, seven pesos for jewelry and a silver goblet; I owe to Antonio de Anguiano, my compadre, 2 pesos for four slaves he brought me; I owe 3 measures of wine to a tavern. All the above are secured by pledges [prendas] of golden bracelets. I owe Diego de Aguilar the Crosseyed 10 pesos for bread, for which he has my pledge of a golden necklace and a crucifix. I lent Pedro de Meneses a gold plate with a turquoise, which belonged to Admiral Diego Columbus. I wish to be buried in the monastery of San Francisco. I leave to Juan Franco, my compadre, and to his wife a new mattress filled with wool and two new Castilian sheets and two embroidered pillows, and to said wife some velvet skirts, a mantle, and a French chemise. I name as my heiress Catalina García, my legitimate daughter by my first husband Juan Lorenzo, and if she predeceases me, my second husband."

974. 10 January 1528. Nicolás de Gibralter, resident of the town of Espíritu Santo, owes Isabel Rodríguez, wife of Miguel de Guadalupe, resident of Tenochtitlán, 40 pesos which she loaned to him.

432. 14 March 1527. González Hernández de los Santos, being in Tenochtitlán, promises to serve Gonzalo Rodríguez de Ocaño, also a resident, as swineherd in the village of Copetayuca for 300 pigs, boars and sows, receiving in exchange board and as many Indians as are required to care for them, as well as one-fourth of the piglets, and one-third of all the fowl of Castile [chickens] that hatch during the year, as well as one Indian slave woman from that region.

435. Francisco Godino, being in Tenochtitlán, grants to Toribio Hernández, muleteer, power of attorney to collect from Inés Ramírez, resident of Medellín, 10 gold pesos she owes as an account receivable.

437. 17 March 1527. Sebastián de Grijalva, resident of Tenochtitlán, approves

the contract sworn to by his wife, Beatriz Hernández, forming a partnership with Francisco Morcillo, resident of this city, for the exploitation of mines.

510. 24 April 1527. Benito de Béjer and Ana Gómez, his wife, residents of Tenochtitlán, sell for 220 pesos in gold to Antonio de Benavides the following properties: "some houses with their corrals and stables and cookhouse and everything else already constructed, to be turned over to him after I have finished a room, already begun, with hall and stairway, and after I enclose a kitchen which is now open."

518. 27 April 1527. Master Francisco, surgeon, son of Master Alonso Jiménez, surgeon to the King of Portugal, and resident of Tenochtitlán, leaving for the Spice Islands, gives power of attorney to Master Diego de Pedraza and Pedro de Villanueva to execute his estate. He leaves a will in which he names his father as heir and imposes upon him an obligation to give his wife Inés Hernández 150 gold pesos; and to María Díaz and Francisca, natural daughter of Master Francisco and María Díaz, 100 pesos in gold.

637. 10 July 1527. Juan López, carpenter, owes Ana López, wife of Alonso Pérez, swordcutler, 131 gold pesos, the price of some merchandise.

695. 3 August 1527. Antonio de Luzcando, Captain that was of the ship--God keep her--named Sant Antón, in the port of San Juan de Ullúa, receives from Juan de Yepes, locksmith, resident of Tenochtitlán, 250 pesos in gold in the name of and for the passage of Leonor de Salcedo, his wife, from Santo Domingo to the town of Medellín.

746. 2 September 1527. Diego de Medina, tailor, owes Ana Méndez 22 gold pesos for a loan she made to him.

755. 7 September 1527. Juan Rodríguez Cerezo, silversmith, being in Tenochtitlán, confers power of attorney to Hernando Garrovero, alcalde of the mines of Michoacán, to collect from Luis García, being at said mines, 22 Indian slaves, 11 men and 11 women, with a chain of iron and 20 iron collars, and to sell said slaves for the best price he can get.

756. 7 September 1527. Diego Juárez, resident of Tenochtitlán, as representative of Juan Jiménez, also resident, sells to Francisco de Orduña, resident of Zacatula and to Juan de la Plaza, 36 Indian slaves, males and females skilled in mining, with 10 iron bolts for saddlery, 20 hoes, and 9 spits: for 216 gold pesos.

837. 30 October 1527. Catalina Pérez, being in Tenochtitlán, agrees to enter the service of Antón de Casanova, of Tenochtitlán, to work for the period of one year as baker in his pastry shop, for room, board, and 75 gold pesos.

888. 14 November 1527. Francisco Rodríguez, resident of Zacatula, sells to Juan de Nájera a slave woman named Leonorilla, 18 or 19 years old, somewhat experienced, for 30 pesos in gold.

910. 30 December 1528. Juan Griego, being in Tenochtitlán, confers legal authority on Diego Sánchez Santiago, resident of Guatemala, to collect from Gonzalo de Rojas and from Gonzalo del Valle "an Indian slave woman from this city of Mexico,

whose name is Angelina, and to take her as his own, he having paid 10 gold pesos."

923. 3 January 1528. Alonso López de Ribera and Pedro Pérez, muleteers, acknowledge owing Andrés de Uceda, muleteer, 150 pesos in gold for a chestnut horse and an Indian woman slave.

961. 8 January 1528. Marina Rodríguez, wife of Lorenzo Payo, resident of Tenochtitlán, grants power of attorney to Cristóbal de Santa Clara, resident of Santo Domingo on the island of Española, or in his absence to Juan de Villoria, also a resident of Santo Domingo, for the purpose of collecting her daughter Inés from whoever has her on that island.

962. 9 January 1528. Marina Rodríguez and Lorenzo Payo, residents of Tenochtitlán, sell a lot with an adobe house facing the monastery of San Francisco to Hernán Jiménez, for 110 pesos in gold.

983. 11 January 1528. Esteban de Borgoña, resident of Tenochtitlán, sells to María Hernández de Ocampo, resident of Tenochtitlán, a house with corral and lofts, coops and granaries, which I constructed, together with the lot, for 150 pesos in gold.

984. 11 January 1528. María Hernández de Ocampo, resident of Tenochtitlán, sells to Pedro de Villagrán, cleric and presbyter, resident of Tenochtitlán, a lot and house in Veracruz for 130 gold pesos.

991. 13 January 1528. Pedro de Villagrán, cleric, resident of Tenochtitlán, gives power of attorney to Alonso de Benavides, resident of Veracruz, to take possession of the houses in Veracruz that Villagrán purchased from María Hernández de Ocampo, resident of Tenochtitlán.

1347. 16 May 1528. María Hernández de Ocampo, widow of Juan de Sedeño, herself a resident of Tenochtitlán, grants power of attorney to cleric Gil González Romero, parish priest of Veracruz, to collect from Juan Volante, resident of Veracruz, 200 gold pesos, for the sale of a house and its land in Veracruz, which Volante sold for her.

998. 13 January 1528. Hernando de Salazar [a servant of Hernán Cortés], resident of Tenochtitlán, grants freedom to an Indian slave woman named Luisa, a native of these parts, for being a Christian and for her service to God.

1125. 28 February 1528. Last will and testament of Pedro Moreno de Nájera, a native of Orunela, near the city of Nájera, now resident in Tenochtitlán: "First, I assert that I do not recall owing anything to anyone, but if some persons come swearing that I owe them up to two or three pesos of gold each, I command that they be paid without other proof or resort to the law. I command that I be buried in the monastery of San Francisco. I leave bequests to the hospital run by the city and to the Cofradía of Nuestra Señora de la Concepción. I return to liberty, on the day of my death, Leonor, a slave woman, for her many and kind services and because she is a Christian; bequeathing to her one Indian slave woman from this region, also named Leonor, and all my furniture. I name as heirs the children I have had with said slave

Leonor and also my natural children, Dieguico and Catalina, which I had with Mary Brava, a native Indian woman of these parts."

1105. 20 February 1528. Gonzalo Sarmiento, being in Tenochtitlán, owes to Juan Domínguez, resident of the same city, 65 pesos and 2 tomines in gold, the price of three Indian slave women named Angelina, Juana, and Luisa.

1169. 16 March 1528. "I, Luisa de Tavira, widow of Francisco de Talavera, myself a resident of Tenochtitlán, renounce the inheritance I received from my husband and instruct that it be given to the monastery of Santa María de la Merced, in Talavera de la Reina [Castile], where the estate of the deceased is."

1203. 30 March 1528. Bachiller Alonso Pérez, resident of Tenochtitlán, pays Pedro de Trigueros, resident of Veracruz and Tenochtitlán, 100 castellanos of gold, each peso worth 485 maravedis, for a dowry.

1212. 1 April 1528. Pedro de Bazán, being in Tenochtitlán, acknowledges owing Bernadino de Santaclara, tutor and guardian of the person and properties of Beatriz de Escobar, a minor and daughter and heiress of Cristóbal Pacheco, 200 pesos in gold, the final payment for 65 Indian slaves, whose price was 3 pesos, 3 granos each.

1286. "I acknowledge owing Francisco Díaz, confectioner, 55 gold pesos for one Indian slave woman." Juan Franco, scout.

1307. 30 April 1528. Pedro López, being in Tenochtitlán, acknowledges having received from Ruy García and Juan de Vargas 46 male Indian slaves and 2 female Indian slaves, in all 48 pieces of merchandise, "all branded in the face with my name and a cross above, and also 32 arrobas [one arroba, as a liquid measure, was about 3 gallons] of white and red wine in their casks, and five arrobas of vinegar and three of oil and one of raisins, and a sword and a dagger and more than 700 horseshoe nails and two iron chains for the slaves and some shoes and a doublet and four cheeses and four strings of garlic and three decks of cards, worth 453 pesos of gold in all, which will be taken to the mines or village of Zacatula to sell."

1324. 5 May 1528. Last will and testament of María de la Barrera, daughter of Rodrigo Alvarez and Isabel Alvarez, natives of the city of Seville [Andalucía]. "Bury me in the Cathedral. I name as my heirs, Juan and Francisco, my natural sons. Alonso García, mason, is the executor of this will."

1331. 9 May 1528. Last will and testament of Diego de Sanabria, native of Cáceres in the kingdoms of Castile, son of Benito de Sanabria and Inés González, resident of Tenochtitlán. "Hernán Cortés owes me for two years' service, which I gave him, and for it he owes me 400 pesos in gold. I wish to be buried in the monastery of San Francisco in the monk's habit of that order; I request that 33 masses be said for me in the convents of San Francisco and Santo Domingo. I leave to the building fund of the Cathedral 4 gold pesos. I request my mother or brother, Hernando de Sanabria, a cleric, to clothe 12 poor people in Cáceres at my expense. I leave 50 pesos in gold to Isabel, my natural daughter, and to Beatriz, an Indian woman, for her dowry

or for whatever she wishes. I name as my heiress my mother, and if she is not still living, my brother.

1381. 3 June 1528. Pedro González Nájera, resident of Tenochtitlán, alienates to Antón de Carmona, also resident, 100 Indian slaves, men and women, skilled in the gold mines of Oaxaca, with their tools and sluicing pans. I sell them as slaves acquired in a just war and as skilled--for the price of 6 gold pesos each, a total of 600 pesos in gold.

1402. 21 August 1528. Gil Sánchez de Colmenares, resident of Tenochtitlán, sells to Pedro Fernández Paniagua an Indian slave woman named Beatriz, who is in Guatemala, a slave captured in a just war. For 9 pesos in gold.

1419. Alonso Núñez acknowledges owing Pedro Aragonés 18 pesos, 2 tomines in gold for two Indian slave women of this region.

1441. 30 August 1528. Martín de Ipinza, native of Guipúzcoa [Basque] and resident of Cestona in that province, in the name of his brother Juan de Ipinza and "by virtue of the power of attorney he gave to me before he died," makes this document to settle the estate. "I acknowledge for him and for me no debts owing to anyone except for the speculative venture of the ship, which God protect in the name of Jesús María. All debts owing in Castile will be paid if the ship comes in. My brother will be buried in the monastery of Santo Domingo de Tenochtitlán. Masses will be said by the vicar of Santa María de Cestona for a month and by Juan Martínez de Lali, priest of said church, for one additional month of daily masses with their novenas." Bequests are made to pious funds and the liquidation of business ventures dependent on the ship previously cited. Martín de Ipinza and his mother María Martínez de Alsolayas are named as executors of the estate.

1442. 31 August 1528. Gift. Alonso de Estrada, treasurer and governor of New Spain, and his wife doña Marina, on the occasion of the marriage of their son Juan Alfonso with the daughter of don Lope Fernández de Treviño, resident and <u>regidor</u> [alderman] of Ciudad Real in the kingdoms of Castile, cede and transfer their estates in said city and the estates they possess in Torrecilla, Poblechuela, and Cehiruela, near Ciudad Real, as well as income property which may be bought with the 2,500 pesos sent by Alonso de Estrada to the Casa de Contratación de Indias, Seville.

1503. 12 September 1528. Francisco de Torres, a cleric and presbyter and resident of Tenochtitlán, owes Juan de Burgos, resident, 58 pesos, 4 tomines in gold, the rest of the price of 330 pesos for a Morisco slave woman, a native of Oran, Morocco.

1534. 17 September 1528. Martín de Ipinza, being in Tenochtitlán, grants to Francisco Montaño, resident, a bill of sale for a white slave woman, native of the Barbary Coast, called Catalina, seized in a just war and not in peacetime, for 230 gold pesos.

1567. 24 September 1528. Antón de Almodóvar del Campo, being in Tenochtitlán,

and a native of Almodóvar del Campo, grants power of attorney to his wife, Violante Núñez, so that before coming to this New Spain she may deliver to her daughter the houses and vineyards she possessed in said city in the kingdoms of Castile.

1627. 5 October 1529. Sancho de Frías sells to Isabel de Frías, the wife of Licenciado Alvaro de Valdivia, resident of Tenochtitlán, a vacant lot and houses (except for the land already sold to Benito de Béjer) for 150 gold pesos.

1746. 11 November 1528. Last will and testament of Fernando de Santiago, native of Jerez de la Frontera [Andalucía], being in Tenochtitlán. "Collect from Ruy González, a resident, 156 pesos and 4 tomines in gold, and from Rodrigo Romero, 4 pesos in gold; from Gonzalo de Ovalle, eleven pesos of gold I lent him in Cuba; I wish to be buried in the monastery of San Francisco. I bequeath 3 pesos in gold to the building fund of the Cathedral of Tenochtitlán. . . . I demand from don Hernán Cortés the return of many pigs and other things which said Cortés was left by my brother, Juan de Jerez, now deceased. I bequeath to Elvira Martín, daughter of Catalina Martín, wife of Bartolomé Martín, the houses and vineyards I had in Jerez de la Frontera. Collect from Cristóbal Muñoz, muleteer, 5 pesos and a half of gold, the price of some shoes. I name as heir Ruy González and charge him with the support of Juan, my natural son, whom I had with an Indian woman of Cuba and who is now on the island of Santo Domingo."

1766. 18 November 1528. Antón Méndez, silversmith, resident of Tenochtitlán, grants to his legitimate wife, Isabel Vázquez, permission to sue Andrés Alonso, her son-in-law and the husband of Isabel Vázquez, her daughter, for the return of Isabel's dowry.

Vol. II Notary: Martín de Castro. 1536-1538.

1796. 23 June 1536. Acknowledgement of a debt by Juan de Villarte, resident of Tenochtitlán-México, owed to Diego de Baeza, 50 gold pesos for the purchase of a black slave woman called Luisa.

1805. 5 July 1536. Antón Cavañero, son of Antón Cavañero and of Francisca García, now dead, who were residents of the city of Seville, parish of La Triana [Andalucía], being in Tenochtitlán-México, cedes to Marina Alonso, Inés García, and Juana de los Reyes, his sisters, all the real and moveable properties and other rights which might belong to him as inheritance from his parents in the city of Seville.

1834. 29 July 1536. Diego Vázquez, resident of Tenochtitlán-México, confirms the sale of two Indian slaves of this land, one male and the other female, of the Huastec language, whom Juan de Montilla, town crier of the Council, sold in his name to Bartolomé Sánchez, being in this city, for 26 pesos of mined gold, swearing that these are slaves taken in a just war and not in peace.

1856. 7 August 1536. Bernadino Enríquez, resident of México, sells to Alonso Contreras, city councilman and resident of said city, an Indian slave woman of this

land called Catalina, who bears on her face the King's brand as well as some letters that spell Juan Besos, for the price of 50 pesos of mined gold.

1862. 8 August 1536. Juan Cisneros, a resident of Tenochtitlán, son and heir of Pedro Vizcaíno, resident of Alba de Tormes in the kingdoms of Castile, whose inheritance has been inventoried, gives power of attorney to his sister Isabel de Ponte to collect and receive all the property and rights which correspond to him as heir.

1865. 13 August 1536. Will, sworn to in Tenochtitlán-México by Ochoa de las Rivas, widower of María Pérez de Olate, resident of Bilbao and being in said city. He is to be buried in the monastery of San Francisco, of this said city; he gives 12 pesos of mined gold to the Hospital de Nuestro Señor in Mexico [City] and asks to be made a layman member of the Cofradía of said hospital. He owes to the heirs of Gonzalo de Ugarte everything the book and contracts claim and commands that a jewel be collected from them, a golden trinket with a little gold chain, the jewel being a white and gold agate with the face of Alexander carved upon it and other figures with helm of pearl, which "I left with said Gonzalo de Ugarte"; and from Martín Ibáñez, certain pesos of gold. He commands that Martín de Martyarto, who resides in the province of Guatemala, be paid 100 gold pesos of mined gold . . .; to Martín de Abarruza he owes all that he swore; to Domingo de Zornoza, a Basque merchant and resident of the city of Seville, 25 Castilian ducats; to Juan de Mendiri, resident of the town of Ondárroa, Vizcaya, 500 pesos of gold; to a secretary of the Duke of Alba, 50 Castilian ducats, which he borrowed in Bilbao; to Martín de Larrinaga, resident of Bilbao, 50 Castilian ducats in gold; to Pedro de Iráurigi, resident of the same town, all that was sworn; to Gaspar Terrero, resident of Valencia, 100 castellanos which he lent me and 80 more for which I left five pieces of artillery and some ammunition. He commands that accounts be requested from said Gaspar Terrero of the power of attorney that I left him to sell men and women slaves in Italy and of money I entrusted to him; to Luis Trinco, merchant and resident of Valencia, 12 gold ducats; to Julio Barza, resident of Valencia, 50 pesos in gold; to Diego de Fabrigny, resident of Peru, 50 pesos of mined gold for a black slave man. He leaves to each one of the orders for the redemption of captives in Jerusalem one gold real. To a maiden, his daughter, called Francisca, whom he had with Beatriz, the wife of Juan Ordóñez, resident of Palermo, 100 ducats so that she may become a professed nun in the Monastery of Santa Clara in Bilbao, and if she does not want to, then for her dowry.

I swear to let free of every charge of subjection, captivity, and servitude, now and forever, a white Moorish woman, Elena, my servant, for the good and loyal services she has rendered to me and because she is a Christian. He frees also Luisico, his Indian slave, a native of Guatemala, and pleads for the mercy of Fray Juan de Zumárraga, Bishop of Mexico, who has him in his custody. He names as heir Antonio de la Riva, his legitimate son, whom he had with his wife María Pérez de Olate. He names as executors Fray Juan de Zumárraga, Fray Cristóbal Maldonado of the order of San Francis-

co, Sancho López de Agurto, and Martín Abarruza. Sworn to in the lodgings of the Bishop of Mexico, Fray Juan de Zumárraga.

1896. 30 August 1536. In the lodgings of the reverend Bishop of Mexico, Fray Juan de Zumárraga. Ochoa de las Rivas declares changes in his will. He orders that masses be said by the Dean and Ecclesiastical Cabildo of Mexico, by the monasteries of San Agustín and Santo Domingo, and by the clergy and chaplains of the principal church of Mexico City; he commands that there be sent to the monastery of Santa Clara of Bilbao, in the kingdoms of Castile, a silver chalice and vestments to say mass in, with all embroidery, to cost 30 silver ducats; another chalice of silver and vestments with all their adornments, worth 25 silver ducats, to Our Lady of Begoña, which is a church in Bilbao.

He revokes the clause in his will that frees Elena, the Moorish woman slave, ordering on the contrary that she be sold. He reaffirms the freeing of the Indian ladino slave Luisico, with the restriction that until he marries, he must reside with the Bishop of Mexico.

1875. 19 August 1536. Francisco Lombardo and Bárbola de Saavedra, his wife, residents of Tenochtitlán-México, sell to Juan Pérez Sevillano, merchant, being in this same city, 21 Indian slaves, men and women, branded with the brand of His Majesty; one slave man and one slave woman, both blacks, named Cristóbal and María, a lame chestnut horse with a blaze [cherrión], and some houses situated in the said city of Mexico, one part bordering on the houses of Juan de Cisneros and Juan Núñez, and in front on the principal street; and a lot fronting on said houses: for 1,180 pesos of mined gold.

1883. 22 August 1536. Bill of sale pledged by María Gutiérrez to Alonso Muñoz, master of Roa, to sell a black slave woman for the price of 85 mined gold pesos.

1914. 9 September 1536. Alonso Cano, muleteer, being in Tenochtitlán-México, sells to doña Inés Cabrera, widow of Juan de la Torre, who was a resident of said city, half of a team composed of 12 mules and two machos, with all their equipment, for the price of 1,050 pesos in mined gold, declaring that he has sold the other half of said team to Luis de Córdoba, merchant.

1915. 9 September 1536. Doña Inés de Cabrera, widow of Juan de la Torre, resident of Tenochtitlán-México, and Luis de Cabrera, merchant, being in said city, declare a debt to Alonso Cano, muleteer, of 1,050 pesos of mined gold, as a result of having acquired half a mule team.

1916. 9 September 1536. Contract of partnership between doña Inés de Cabrera and Luis de Córdoba, for two years, in which the mule team acquired from Alonso Cano, muleteer, according to the documents previously drawn up, will be used for the trade between Veracruz or whatever other port and Mexico City, the business to be managed and the muleteers to be contracted by the latter, and the costs and profits to be divided between the two partners.

1954. 27 September 1536. Juan de Villarte, tailor, resident of the city of Tenochtitlán-México, sells to Alonso de la Barrera, resident of the same city, a black slave named Luisa, one-eyed, for 60 pesos of mined gold and 200 head of little sheep for the same amount.

1967. 5 October 1536. Gregorio de Burgos, merchant, being in the city of Tenochtitlán-México, sells to Juan de Alvarado, resident of the same city, now absent, a slave woman of black color named Leonor, 20 years of age, more or less, whom he delivered to León de Agulla in the name of the buyer, for 160 pesos of mined gold.

1970. 6 October 1536. Bill of sale between Juan Pérez de Herrera, who holds power of attorney for Juan de Vera, resident of Tenochtitlán-México, and Bartolomé de Algora, being in the same city, for a black slave woman named Inés, more or less 35 years old, for 75 pesos of mined gold.

1998. 16 October 1536. Juan de Villalobos, being in Tenochtitlán-México, sells to Gabriel de Valmaseda, merchant, resident of the same city, a black slave woman named Elvira, about 16 years old, for the price of 110 pesos of mined gold.

2019. 2 November 1536. Pedro Fernández de Carmona, resident of Tenochtitlán-México, sells to Pedro del Golfo, resident of the same city, a team of horses I have: 16 horses and a colored mule, three of them gray, two sorrel, one roan and cockeyed, three bays, and the rest chestnut, and a tan, bob-tailed mule, which I sell with all their rig of blankets, reins, and gear, and all else they have when I take them on the trail, and with 15 pair of rawhide whips, and a black slave man named Zamba, a black slave woman who is called Catalina, and another black slave who goes by the name of Juan, who has run away, and seven Indian slaves who are called Inés, Catalina, Angelina, Juana, Isabel, Francisca, and the other Catalina, with their children, for the price of 1,200 pesos of mined gold.

2036. 9 November 1536. Will and testament of Miguel García, native of Fuente de Cantos and residing in Tenochtitlán-México, in which he orders that he be buried in the convent of San Francisco of this same city . . . "and that they say a requiem mass for me, sung with a night vigil, offering bread and wine and donning vestments, which shall be done by the priests of the principal church of this city."

Pay to the Hospital de Nuestra Señora de la Concepción in Mexico City 5 ducats; to the Cofradía of the Blessèd Sacrament 4 pesos of gold; to the principal church another 4 pesos of gold; to the monasteries of San Francisco, Santo Domingo, and San Agustín, half a marc of gold; and to the monastery of the Mother of God in the same city of Mexico, 4 pesos of gold.

He admits that he is the debtor of Francisco de Lerma. He orders that there be collected from Francisco de Terrazas, Francisco Maldonado, and Juan Martín, carpenter, the amounts that they owe him, and from Antonio Salazar 100 pesos of mined gold for 10 oxen which he sent him, meaning to form a company, which never got organized, but which was meant to charter a ship; and from Alonso de Salcedo, 38 pesos of

mined gold, the rest of an obligation to buy a horse, by virtue of a writ sworn to before Rodrigo de Soria, notary; and from Pedro Sánchez, being in Oaxaca, 24 or 26 pesos.

He declares that he has given to Antonio Hernández, silversmith, 45 pesos of mined gold for the costs of his illness and he commands that the account be liquidated. He testifies that he gave to Cristóbal Ruíz a gold nugget valued at 8 or 9 pesos. He orders that nothing be collected from Sancho de Frías, because nothing is owed. He leaves to a maiden to be named by Father Francisco Martínez, clergyman, 10 pesos in gold to help with her dowry.

He names as heiress his niece, elder daughter of his brother Alonso García, resident of Santa Olalla de la Sierra, and if she has died, then to his aunt Jiménez and to Isabel Jiménez.

He frees an Indian slave woman named Francisca. He lists as his property the following goods: two mares, one bright chestnut and the other dark; a cape and a jacket, both black, another tan, one blue, and a green cloak; a bed with a mattress from Castile; two saddles; and the rest goods and furniture in my houses and chests; a black slave man named Juanico, at present in Oaxaca, in the custody of Francisco Caxco. He names as executors Francisco de Terrazas and the reverend Father Francisco Martínez, clergyman.

2051. 20 November 1536. Melchor Vázquez, being in Tenochtitlán-México, sells to the very illustrious Marqués del Valle de Oaxaca, don Hernán Cortés, the shares belonging to him in the mine named the rich mine of the Albarrada, in Sutepeque, which he acquired from Alonso de Soto, as well as the shares sold to Alonso de Sosa, general treasurer, with the exception of the Romeral, which he possessed jointly with said Soto and Francisco de Aguilar, with 20 Indian slaves, men and women, for the price of 12,000 pesos of mined gold.

2055. 20 November 1536. Last will and testament of Francisca de Villalobos, wife of Diego Marmolejo, resident of Mexico City, in which she orders that she be buried in the Hospital de la Concepción of said city, to which she leaves five Castilian ducats. She distributes the traditional alms, declaring that she possesses neither property nor debts and names as universal heiress her mother Catalina González, wife of Juan de Cáceres Delgado, resident of the same city, and designates as executor her husband.

2068. 25 November 1536. Alonso Núñez, merchant and resident of the city of Tenochtitlán-México, swears: "Inasmuch as I have married, before the Holy Mother Church, you, Leonor de Alcabdete, my wife and the daughter of Licenciado Alcabdete, resident of the town of Marchena; by this document I swear and admit that I have received in the form of a dowry from you, Leonor de Alcabdete, my wife, 800 pesos of mined gold before this public notary, in certain jewels of gold and silver and in clothing and precious ornaments. . . . I have received, to wit:

1 dress of black velvet 70 pesos

1 dress of black Damask	50 pesos
1 plush dress with 9 pleats and a border of velvet	30 pesos
1 cloak of black taffeta	20 pesos
1 cloak of scarlet	10 pesos
1 dress of green wool with sleeves and decorations of green velvet	20 pesos
1 scarlet rapier (verduguillo)	15 pesos
12 bracelets and 10 rings of gold	50 pesos
9 pillows	20 pesos
3 rugs	30 pesos
1 headdress with golden decorations	30 pesos
445 pesos of gold in the form of jewelry and a necklace with precious stones and pearls	

I swear to said Leonor de Alcabdete . . . in honor of your background and of your virginity and of the children that we, God willing, shall have, I give to you as a morning gift, on the occasion of our marriage, 200 gold pesos, one-tenth of all my wealth, to remain in your possession as does your dowry, as your own, and I guarantee this with a mortgage on all my possessions.

2084. 1 December 1536. Bartolomé Ruíz, silversmith, being in Tenochtitlán-México, sells to Francisco Ruíz, his brother, being in the same city, two Indian slave women named Juana and Angelina and one Indian slave man named Juan, a silversmith, "with the tools of my trade as silversmith which are in my store, which tools I have and bought from Pedro de España, for the price of 500 pesos of mined gold: 300 in cash and 200 which the buyer has already paid to said Pedro de España."

2126. 23 December 1536. Lázaro de Ordaz, hosier, resident of Tenochtitlán-México, declares this document of dowry for Isabel Gómez, daughter of Juan Gómez, now dead; in the presence of Jerónimo León, resident of said city, and tutor and guardian of his wife, for 1,100 pesos of mined gold which he has received as her dowry along with 18 mares of all ages and colors and certain jewelry and ornaments.

2210. Luis López, merchant, being in the city of Tenochtitlán-México, declares that he has received from Cristóbal de Benavente and Antón de Vides, silversmith, a white slave woman from the Barbary Coast called Luisa de Torres, "on condition that if she paid 105 pesos of mined gold, which was the price I paid for her, I would be obliged to free her. Juan Zapata and Bernardo de la Torre have paid this amount in the name of said slave, and I now free her from all captivity so that you may marry and make a will and go wherever you wish."

2217. 7 March 1537. Acknowledgement of a debt that Francisco Díaz, cobbler, resident of Tenochtitlán-México, owes to Leonor García, wife of Francisco Sánchez, residents of the town of Escacena, both absent, as heirs of Antón Núñez de Escacena and of Francisco Guillén, resident of said city of Mexico, for 340 pesos of mined gold, the remainder of 400 gold pesos, and two Indian slaves, natives of Jalisco, one man, one woman, sold for 40 pesos of said amount.

2224. 12 March 1537. Power of attorney sworn by María Gorvalán, wife of

Diego de los Olivos, resident of the city of Tenochtitlán-México, as tutor and guardian of her daughter María de los Olivos, to Melchor.

2227. 13 March 1537. Before Martín de Castro, notary public, Diego de Torres appears, declaring that since Juan de Santander has quarreled with him over possession of an Indian slave woman named Juana, of Pánuco, and another Indian servant named María, from La Huasteca, demanding their delivery, Diego de Torres will give to Pedro Lozano 200 pesos of mined gold, on the condition that if in the space of 35 days Santander does not receive the Indian women, the money will be forfeited.

2228. 13 March 1537. Juan de Santander, being in the city of Mexico, appears before the notary Martín de Castro and declares that because of the preceding document and the contract within it, he ends the quarrel which he had with Diego de Torres over the claim to a slave woman, whom he had taken from Pánuco.

2235. 17 March 1537. Last will and testament. Tomás de Valverde, native of the city of Avila, son of Bernadino de Valverde, now dead, and of Juana del Peral, his wife, resident of Avila, being now in Tenochtitlán-México, declares: that he be buried in the Hospital de la Concepción de México. He distributes the customary alms and leaves 12 yards of velvet to the Monastery of Santo Domingo. He orders that 12 pesos be spent for oil for the lamp of Our Lady, who is in the chapel of Our Lady in the principal church, back of the choir. He leaves to the Virgin of Guadalupe in the kingdoms of Castile, 4 gold ducats. To Juan de Santo Domingo, resident of Avila, 30,000 maravedis.

He acknowledges debts owed to Gregorio de Villaverde, 300 pesos of mined gold that he gave him to guard. He leaves to the daughter of Juan Lavado, resident of Avila, who is a maiden, 150 ducats of Castile to aid in her dowry. He declares that with Baltasar de Palacios and Francisco González he bought from one Juan Méndez 60 Indian slaves, having received to pay for them 506 pesos of mined gold from Francisco González. He sent said Francisco González about 150 pesos of mined gold to Zacatula with merchandise. He declares that Gregorio Montero, merchant, owes him 206 gold pesos for two horses with their gear, which he sold to him. He orders that accounts be taken of Ventura del Espinar, Diego González, and Ruy Díaz, and Gonzalo de Ecija, merchant, and Antón de Silva be given 6 slaves, two-twelfths of slaves expert in mining, which they did not receive when they took possession of certain mines and slaves which he sold to them.

He declares that the corregidor [Spanish head of an Indian village] Flores, husband of Isabel de Oñate, owes him 40 pesos of mined gold and another 40 pesos of common gold; Antón de Silva, merchant, owes 1,650 pesos of mined gold; Diego de Logroño, 820 pesos of the same gold; Pedro de Sepúlveda, certain amounts; and Jerónimo de León, 137 pesos of common gold, of which he has paid 46 pesos of common gold. Miguel de Zuazo owes 106 pesos of the gold of tepuzque, Juan de Velasco a certain amount, and Nufio Hidalgo, blacksmith, 11 pesos of common gold.

He bequeaths to his brother, Sebastián de Valverde, present, 550 pesos. . . . He frees Francisca, his Indian slave. To his daughter Juanica he leaves two muleloads of clothing from Cuernavaca. He declares that when he married, he received no dowry from his wife, Guiomar Pérez, but he instructs that her morning gift be given to her. He names as universal heiress his daughter María de Valverde, and as her tutors and guardians he names his wife and Diego Morales, a resident of Avila.

2239. 19 March 1537. Juana Cortés, wife of Juan de Rivera, residents of the city of Tenochtitlán-México, rents to Ana Pérez a house neighboring hers, for one year and the price of 30 pesos of mined gold.

2242. 22 March 1537. Alonso Palomeque de la Peña, legitimate son of Sancho de la Peña and of María Palomeque, residents of the city of Guadalajara in the kingdoms of Castile, being in Tenochtitlán-México, gives power of attorney for collections to Antonio Altamirano, being present in said city.

2257. 7 April 1537. Juan de Cáceres Delgado, resident of Tenochtitlán-México, gives to his nephew, Bartolomé Delgado, who is going to marry María de León, one-third of his real and moveable properties and a chestnut horse, saddled and bridled, with the trappings, and a black slave groom, with the promise that he may receive said one-third on the death of his benefactor and the horse and black man and money to buy them whenever he wants.

2258. 7 April 1537. Approbation given to the preceding document, concerning the part about the black slave, given by doña Catalina González, wife of Juan de Cáceres Delgado.

2263. 10 April 1537. Special power of attorney given by Francisco de Lora, being in Tenochtitlán-México, to Pedro de Avila, now absent, to collect moneys and Indian men and women, branded or not, who may be in the custody of other persons or who have run away.

2312. 14 June 1537. Gaspar Hurtado, resident of Tenochtitlán-México, swears to provide a dowry for María de Sotomayor: 600 pesos of mined gold in the form of some houses in this city, bordering on the houses of Juan Rivera; an Indian slave woman, who claims to be pregnant; some gold jewelry, ornaments, and cloth. As a morning gift, he gives to her as his wife 200 pesos of mined gold, guaranteeing that the total of 800 pesos she will have for her own.

2314. 16 June 1537. Melchor Sánchez, being in Tenochtitlán-México, and representing María Gorvalán, widow of Diego de los Olivos, sells to Jorge González an Indian slave woman named Luisa, branded with the King's brand, for 42 pesos of mined gold.

2336. General power of attorney that Ana Rodríguez, widow of Hernando Jerez and resident of Tenochtitlán-México, gives in her own name and as guardian of her minor children to Diego Hernández.

2369. 14 July 1537. In the presence of the very illustrious señor Jerónimo

Ruíz de la Mota, *alcalde ordinario* [councilman] of the city of Tenochtitlán-México, the notary public Martín de Castro, and witnesses, appears Luisa de Escobedo, wife of Juan de Escobedo, with permission from her husband, who is here present. She declares that since her husband had sold to *bachiller* [college graduate] Alonso Pérez some lots which they have on the outskirts of this city, near the road to Chapultepec, bordering on some orchards that the *bachiller* has, according to the writ sworn before His Majesty's notary Hernán Sánchez de Hortigosa, she ratifies and approves the sale.

2370. 15 July 1537. Testament sworn to by Inés Hernández, wife of Pedro Zamorano, resident of the city of Tenochtitlán-México. She orders that she be buried in the Monastery of San Agustín; leaves money for masses for her soul to be said in the principal church of this city; 22 pesos shall be delivered to Diego de la Palma; 5 Castilian ducats to the Hospital de la Concepción de México; 2 barrels of oil to illuminate the blessed sacrament in the principal church; one to the Church of the True Cross; and another each to the monasteries of Santo Domingo, San Francisco, and San Agustín.

She orders that her *comadre*, Beatriz Muñoz, be paid 3 pesos of common gold "to make my soul at ease"; she orders that four good mares be bought . . . [the original is torn] Monastery of San Agustín to help with the costs of school.

She leaves to Magdalena, her servant, 50 good ewes for her dowry. She frees her slaves Isabelica and Catalina, and Catalina's daughter, Juanica, and orders the first be paid 30 pesos in gold and a dress for her dowry, and for the second a mule-load of clothing. She also frees her slave Catalina, an Indian woman who in her own language is called Soroche, and Catalina's son Antonio, leaving to them a mule-load of clothing. To Magdalenica, her maid, she gives a velvet-trimmed dress. The rest of the clothing she leaves to Magdalenica and Francisca, both *mestiza* women, who live in her house, and to Isabel, her slave, in equal parts. She asks Juana Pérez, wife of Jerónimo de León, keep said Magdalenica with her until her marriage, declaring that this is according to what Juana Pérez and the maker of this will's husband, Pedro Zamorano, have agreed to, and a bed should be given to her. She orders 20 masses said for the souls in purgatory, for the souls of the Indians of Uquila, "for what I owe them." She commands, too, that Perico should receive a mare and Father Bartolomé Romero vestments to say mass with. She leaves as executor of this will her husband and names him also as her universal heir.

2452. 17 December 1537. Gregorio de Saldaña, resident of Tenochtitlán-México, swears that inasmuch as, by the grace of God, his daughter, María de Saldaña, is going to marry Bartolomé de Perales, he makes a legal contract for her dowry and to help the married couple with their expenses: one-third of the Mecatlán and its lands [*estancias*] and one-third of the tribute and the services of the Indians which he has in *encomienda*, to be had and held by his daughter.

2469. 4 January 1538. Doña Inés Cabrera, widow of Juan de la Torre, resident

of Tenochtitlán-México, and Luis de Córdoba, merchant, dissolve their partnership and declare that their mule team has been sold.

Note: In Vol. II the records continue with the register of Diego de Ayala, 1551-1553. The context of the 1540s and 1550s is completely different from the post-Conquest period. Anyway, after typing this far, I say with the valiant reader, enough is enough.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

1. Some terms need explaining:

Dowry is a daughter's inheritance from her father, and it is given to her on her wedding day. It can be anything: land, income from harvests or rentals, jewels, dresses, and the like. Her husband could use or invest or manage the dowry, but he could not sell it or alienate it without her consent. When he died, she received her dowry back to support her widowhood.

Dower rights had first claim on a husband's estate. (In her very-hard-to-read book Woman as Force in History, 1946, Mary Beard explains that American women had dower rights, too, guaranteed by a branch of English law called Equity.)

Morning gift. The dowry was given to the bride by her father (or parents) on her wedding day. The morning gift was given to the bride by the groom on the morning after the wedding night. (The notary records disclose what the groom was rewarding his bride for.) The morning gift was added to the dowry as the bride's own private property.

Mule train was a big deal in New Spain because it was the only way goods could be transported on land. Owning a mule train then was like owning a railroad in the nineteenth century.

Maiden name. Most American women lose their name when they marry. Women in Spanish-speaking countries never have. They retain their maiden name and simply add their husband's name to it. Let us say she was born Isabel Rodríguez. When she married Manuel de Fagoaga, she became Isabel Rodríguez de Fagoaga. Both parents give their names to their children, who would be María or Jorge Fagoaga y Rodríguez. How does anyone know which name to use? Most Spanish-speakers choose their most unusual name, in this case Fagoaga. The oppression suffered by American women in losing their name has never been experienced by Spanish-speaking women. Their lifetime right to their own name is a privilege they have enjoyed for centuries.

Slaves taken in a Just War. The Spanish Crown forbade anyone to enslave peaceful, civilian, native peoples. However, if one could prove that he had fought in a "just war," for God and the King, against militant infidels who refused Christianity, he could capture those bad guys and legally enslave them. Indian slavery was abolished

in 1542. After that, no Indian of any kind could be legally enslaved. Blacks stayed slaves in Mexico until 1826.

Berbers, from the Barbary Coast. White people from Morocco.

Comadre, compadre. The relationship between a baptized child's biological and spiritual parents is called compadrazgo. The mother and the godmother are comadres; the father and godfather are compadres. What is involved is a trusted friendship between adults.

Cofradía. A men's service organization (like Lions, Shriners, Rotary), but associated with a church.

Encomienda. A "mercy" awarded by the King of Spain to a Spaniard whereby Indians would pay him tribute (or if they were too poor and had nothing, their labor services) in exchange for Hispanization and conversion to Christianity. It was not a land grant and it was not perpetual. The encomienda was officially abolished November 20, 1542. Notice that the Spaniard did not own any land and did not own any people. He just had rights to Indian labor and tribute.

2. Notary records are irritating to read because in writing fast, the notaries are ruthlessly cavalier about changes of person. Normally, when a notary transcribes, he summarizes in his own words: Pedro de Fonseca, a native of Temescaltepec, frees his white slave woman. However, occasionally, the notary changes the pace and writes down from dictation a direct quote: his white slave woman "whom I obtained in a just war and who has served me long and lovingly." In these translations that I have made, quotation marks signal direct quotes--the person paying the notary is speaking out directly.

3. Some of my students complain that you should not make generalizations from such scanty data as these notary records provide. I try to reassure them by reminding them that this data is all there is. They are, of course, right, but we compromise by softening the generalizations with pillowy words like "may," "appear," "perhaps," "some," "probably," "maybe." No one in the world but you (and my students in Hawaii) have ever used these earliest of notary records to learn about the activities of women in New Spain. If you write a paper on this, everything you say will be new to historians. It's not just new to you--it's new to everybody. That is why it is worth doing.

Some students feel more comfortable if they can make comparisons. The only text ever written that uses notary records to describe the activities of women is Chapter IX of James Lockhart's prizewinning book, Spanish Peru, 1532-1560, A Colonial Society (University of Wisconsin Press, 1968). Be sure and read his "Introduction," where he confesses how he knows what he knows. This is one of the top ten books ever written in the field of Latin American history. It is easy to read and meticulously researched. My students always like it. I treasure it.

4. How does James Lockhart handle all this material from notary records? He makes

a card for every person, notes down the date and a few words to describe the situation. When he alphabetizes the cards, he sees the changes.

5. Notary records deal with women in the public sphere, but, strangely, these Mexican ones omit entirely the life of nuns. (Lockhart makes many interesting observations on nuns in Peru.) Josefina Muriel de la Torre has written a heavy tome on Conventos de monjas en la Nueva España (Ed. Santiago, Mexico City, 1946). In it she relates a few experiences that might provide comparisons to Lockhart's Peru. In the early sixteenth century a group of Spanish women spontaneously formed a religious commune, living according to informal vows in the house of Catalina Bustamante. In 1540 four women from Spain lived as beatas (nuns without patent), with the blessing of Bishop Juan de Zumárraga. From 1540 to 1590 twenty-two convents were established in Mexico City alone. Most nuns were Spanish or Creole (born in Mexico of Spanish parents) girls of good family. There were "scholarships" for poor girls who could not afford to bring with them the required dowry of $3,000 or $4,000. Not until the eighteenth century were pure, virgin, legitimate, Indian noblewomen permitted to become mendicant, contemplative Franciscan nuns of the order of Corpus Christi in Querétaro and Guadalajara. I find no mention of Black nuns anywhere in Mexico in the sixteenth century.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. What work are people doing--what do they do for a living? What people?
2. True or false: Colonial Mexico was clearly a capitalist economy.
3. Women's rights are mainly involved with laws. In colonial times there were more laws defining the relationship between women and private property than any other aspect of their activities. Some small, very specific questions may help you describe the status of women in post-Conquest Mexico: Can women make contracts? Can they inherit and bequeath? Can they buy, sell, and own real property (land)? Can they lend and borrow money? Can they act as legal guardians for their children? Can they form a business partnership? Are they allowed to be tycoons? What women do these things--married or single or both? Race?
4. Slaves. What races of people are enslaved? (You'll be surprised.) Is there a certain kind (or kinds) of work that each ethnic group of slaves does? That just women slaves do? Which slaves are bought for the highest prices? The lowest? Can you explain this? How are slaves treated? What kind of people pursue runaway slaves? (Is it the police?) Under what conditions are slaves freed? (James Lockhart has interesting observations on slaves in Spanish Peru. A more expansive description may be found in Fred Bowser, The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524-1650, Stanford Press, 1974.)
5. A student of mine compared the prices of people to the prices of things. She was horrified.
6.

UNIT III: Woman, Mind, and Punishment:

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

SOR JUANA INES DE LA CRUZ
Born Nepantla at midnight 12 November 1651.
Died Mexico City at 4 a.m. 17 April 1695 (age 43).

INTRODUCTION

The Life of the Mind. Genius. Woman.

In a sex role stereotyped view, which term does not fit the other two?

Ah. Indeed.

Have you ever known a genius personally? How did you know s/he was a genius? Leta Hollingworth worked with some in a high school in New York City. In her book Children Above 180 I.Q., she says there is one immediate tip-off: the clear and flawless working of a mind.

We can contrive a new stereotype, why not? Woman as Mind. And our model is Mexican! And from a broken home. Her mother was a farmer in the shadow of Popocatépetl, a mountain that looks exactly as a volcano ought to look. Her mother was a working farmer, a single-parent head of household. That sounds like a story in itself. Here is a mind born in a body of the wrong sex and in the wrong economic class. Higher education itself was organized for leisure-class men.

She was born Juana Inés de Asbaje y Ramírez de Santillana. Her father was a Spanish Basque immigrant, Pedro de Asbaje y Vargas Machuca. Somewhere in his mother's family came a conquistador whose coat of arms has come to symbolize the valor, craze, and greed of the Spanish conquest: ¡A la espada y al compás, más y más y más y más! Juana's mother was a Creole, born in Mexico, the daughter of another Spanish immigrant, a thoughtful, reflective, bookish man named Pedro Ramírez. The families were decent tenant truck farmers, small slaveholders. When Juana was born, she had an older sister.

Their mother was to have six children in all, and all were Creoles. These families were medianos, respectable, not-very-rich middle class.

Mind exists in the context of person. What are geniuses like as personalities? Leta Hollingworth says they tend to be merry, unspoiled, playful, and affectionate. Some have a bubbling sense of humor. They show a strong desire for privacy. Often they are modest and considerate even to the point of self-denial. They are avid to learn.

When Juana recalled the first time she felt that eagerness to learn, she remembered she was three years old: I burned with a desire to know . . . She toddled after

her sister to a dame school and learned to read before any of the grown-ups in her family knew what she was doing. The dame school was the only institutional educational facility she attended. She was self-taught. She read along the shelves of her grandfather's library. She read every book she could get her hands on. Though they tried, no one succeeded in stopping her or humiliating her or boring her to death.

At the age of eight, miraculously, she went to Mexico City to live with her aunt and uncle. Why, no one quite explains. She took twenty Latin lessons from a tutor, enough to give her a mastery of that language.

When she was thirteen, the viceroy and vicereine of New Spain took her to live with them in the palace. That sounds like a fairy tale, Little Miss Nobody from rural nowhere went to court and lived happily ever after. How was it possible? Again, no one quite explains. She was, of course, a prodigy. She liked people, she was charming, cheerful, witty. And so very beautiful. She had ivory skin and large chestnut eyes, set wide apart over high cheekbones, a high forehead, a long, thin nose, a beautiful mouth. She had long delicate fingers and little feet. (Remember, this is all you could see of a seventeenth-century lady). She was graceful when she moved. Her male biographers seem to shake their heads disapprovingly and say something like, she was much too beautiful ever to be a nun. Nice, cheerful, witty, smart does not get women into palaces. Beauty gets women into palaces. Prodigy gets women into palaces. But most of all, phenomenal good luck gets women into palaces.

What is there to do in court? Apparently, Juana went to parties, ate suppers, danced, played games, gossiped, laughed, and discussed the news of the day with the young men and women of the court. She was a loving companion to the vicereine. On her own time she won a literary trophy from the University of Mexico. She wrote hymns that cathedral choirs sang. She wrote religious plays for church groups to act out. She wrote prose and poetry in Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin. She wrote beautiful love poetry, and some poignant end-of-love poems. No one knows if she ever really fell in love with anyone, for she never told. Her priest-biographer, who knew her personally, says she did not. Mexican poets and Spanish critics, who love her from the afar of time, say she must have.

The viceroy and his wife prepared for her a splendid fiesta of the life of the mind. Juana was fifteen, it was like a coming-out party. They invited forty university professors, all men, of course, all priests, of course, poets, writers, mathematicians, historians, theologians, philosophers. They gave her a comprehensive oral examination. They thought she answered brilliantly. She thought it was all right--about like hemming a seam more neatly than your teacher.

All she ever wanted to do was live alone and read and write and study. (Would you like to do that? If so, could you do it?) There were only a very few ways a woman could accomplish even a part of that goal in seventeenth-century Mexico. Juana had found the best way, in the court. But the vicereine died and the viceroy was trans-

ferred home to Spain. Juana wanted to go to the university, but the university was for men only. She could put on men's clothes and sneak to class. Her mother refused to let her. Theoretically, a nice girl could wear men's clothes if she obtained dispensation from the pope, but the family could not afford such a luxury. She could marry a man who might, because of her great beauty or his own interests, support and encourage her studies. She was totally opposed to the idea. She was fifteen years old. There was only one other possibility. She entered the convent of Barefoot Carmelites in Mexico City in August 1667. It made her sick. They took her home in November. She got well, but there was still only the one opportunity for her. In February 1669 she entered the convent of St. Jerome as a Hieronymite novice. She became Sor Juana, sister.

They say she was too beautiful ever to be a nun. She surely was too poor. To become a black veil with voice in Divine Office and vote in community affairs, a postulant had to bring to the convent a contribution of $3,000. (A white veil was second-class.) I calculate that Juana's mother had a net worth of $2,000, with five other children to support and farm expenses to meet. A man named Pedro Velázquez de la Cadena paid the $3,000. Who was he--an admirer from the court? A friend of the family? A wealthy philanthropist who routinely paid worthy girls their way to heaven? No one quite tells us.

The Carmelite convent Sor Juana had left was a world of meditation. The convent of San Jerónimo was a world of activists. The nuns made sweets and sold them for charity. The nuns taught little girls Spanish, Latin, mathematics, catechism, music, painting, embroidery. Strangely, Sor Juana was never a teacher. Rather, she served the community as archivist and accountant. Churches and convents were also the banks of New Spain. They lent out capital at interest. They managed income properties. I cannot find a reliable account of how much money Sor Juana might have handled. But by the early nineteenth century San Jeronimo lent out $119,811 at 5 percent and owned properties valued at more than half a million dollars. No one could ever say Sor Juana never met a payroll: she paid workmen, repairmen, chaplains, and servants. She paid to feed and clothe the slaves and the community. She worked, in short, like an executive, under the general supervision of the mayordomo (a man, of course, the business manager).

The hours of everyday life in a convent are marked by the services of Divine Office. The nuns sing day and night in the choir:

Lauds at dawn
Prime at 7
Terce at 9
Sext at noon
Nones at 3
Vespers at 5
Compline at 8
Matins at midnight

Sor Juana loved to sing. Most nuns come to love Divine Office. So probably this holy march of hours made her happy.

There is a beautiful portrait of Sor Juana by Miguel Cabrera in the Historical Museum in Mexico City. (Irving Leonard and Fanchón Royer have put photographs of it in their books). She is seated comfortably at a table, her arm on an open book, her hand reaching out toward an ornate box of quill pens. Behind her are shelves and shelves of beautiful old parchment volumes. This is the best portrait I have ever seen of woman living the life of the mind. It is, of course, posed within the convent.

The Cabrera portrait and the description of convent life by Josefina Muriel de la Torre help us peek at what Sor Juana wore every day. Underneath her habit she put on a prickly wool tunic for underwear. The habit itself was white, a long dress with huge, flowing sleeves. In the picture the material is so fine it seems to shimmer. It was fastened above the waist by a narrow leather belt with an iron buckle. The shawl and scapular are black. A close-fitting white wimple is almost completely hidden by the black veil. Her shoes and stockings are black. The shoes have three-inch heels (un tacón de tres dedos). A very long rosary (of fifteen mysteries) with large black beads hangs from her neck to her knees. An enormous oval brooch reaches from her chin to her breast. It bears a hand-painted religious scene.

That is what she wore every day. Every night she wore that prickly tunic to bed and slept in a large dormitory with the other black veils. In that convent nuns slept on beds, with pillows and blankets, but they did not have any sheets.

With permission from the prioress, a nun could have books, musical instruments, and time to read and write. Sor Juana's priest-biographer recalled that her library contained 4,000 volumes. By her late thirties she had published three volumes of her poetry in Spain. At the time her critics celebrated her as a great lyric poet and called her "the tenth muse." Today many people consider her to be the greatest woman poet that Mexico has ever produced. In a work of scholarly theological criticism, she analyzed a sermon of the great Portuguese Jesuit, Father Antonio Vieira and received praise and publication from a bishop. Her intellectual biographer, Irving Leonard, maintains that the greatest force of her mind was rational and experimental, though he says she was born a generation too early to publish any Enlightened works like that.

Protection can be punishment. Those who insist that we be what we are not, abuse us "for our own good." Who were the people who nagged at Sor Juana to give up her books? A confessor? Some prioresses? Some jealous nuns? "You cannot think and love God . . ." "God wants you to . . ."

Sor Juana tried to defend herself, but the pressure was pitiless. Outside the convent her supports crumbled. In 1688 her mother died. In 1690 the bishop of Puebla, in print, asked her to give up the frivolity and poetry of the world. In 1692 the calm of cosmopolitan Mexico City was shattered by floods, famine, pestilence, and the des-

perate pillaging of starving hordes of people and ravenous wild dogs. Her world had turned to hell.

In 1693 she turned her library over to church authorities to be sold for charity. To demonstrate her new "virtue," she flagellated herself with whips, so hard, so often, that even her confessor (pleased with her progress toward the good life) was slightly appalled. In 1694 she renewed her vows of poverty, chastity, cloister, and obedience and made an abject general confession. She signed it in her own blood, "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz--the worst person in the world." (If you can get to Austin, you can see this document with your own eyes, in the Rare Books Room of the Nettie Lee Benson Collection).

"The worst in the world." They made her guilty for being a genius. They made her guilty for being accomplished. They made her guilty for thinking, for wondering, for living the life of the mind. They did it by making it seem as if talent were selfish, as if love, for God, for other people, demanded complete sacrifice of self. This may be the most formidable weapon ever devised against achievement and creativity in women.

What did Sor Juana do from the ages of 41 to 43? She prayed. She sang Divine Office. She nursed the sisters who were sick. In her leisure time she tortured herself. At 4 a.m. on the spring morning of April 17, 1695, she died. Someone said at the time she died that she went as a good Catholic, in the odor of sanctity, demonstrating the greatest of her talents--knowing how to die.

Note: You should be able to handle bias by now. If I had my druthers, the last paragraph would end like this:

> Typhus crept into her room, just before dawn,
> and like a lover stole her away from a life
> made miserable by cruelly ignorant, narrow-minded,
> godly hypocrites.

The Mexican poet, Amado Nervo, phrases this idea more elegantly. He defines Them as being "full of the dignity, prudence, and tidiness of people who never go to bed after ten and are incapable of sin, particularly the sin of genius." [Juana de Asbaje, p. 110]

THE SOURCES

These are the sources I have translated for you from the original Spanish:

23 February 1669. Last will and testament of Sor Juana. Notary: Joseph de Anaya. When a novice professes and makes her final vows as a nun, she "dies to the world" and may no longer own anything. Therefore, she makes a will, as Sor Juana did here at the age of 17.

26 February 1669. Notarized. Isabel Ramírez gives her daughter a 16-year-old black slave girl.

11 January 1687. Last will and testament of Isabel Ramírez, Sor Juana's mother.

25 November 1690. Carta de la muy ilustra Sor Filotea de la Cruz. "Sor Filotea de la Cruz" is obviously a nun's name, but this letter was really written by a man, Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, the Bishop of Puebla. He was not Sor Juana's bishop or superior, for her convent was subject to Mexico City ecclesiastical authorities. Apparently, in order to praise and chide and advise one nun (whom he could not legally command), the Bishop of Puebla assumed the name of another nun so as to appear to be writing and counseling woman-to-woman, in sisterly camaraderie. The Bishop congratulated Sor Juana for her brilliant analysis of Father Antonio Vieira's sermon. (Fanchón Royer has translated her analysis, which is called the "Carta Atenagórica," or Letter Worthy of Athena. The Tenth Muse, 1952, pp. 86-120.) The Bishop made his approval real by publishing both her analysis and his praise. Then he admonished her. That is the punishment. It hurt Sor Juana deeply.

1 March 1691. Sor Juana Replies. This is the nearest thing to an autobiography that we have by Sor Juana. What is extraordinary is that it is a clear defense of women's right to study and think. This is a series of excerpts, freely translated. I have spared you all the learned Latin quotations.

A Fragment of Poetry. I am sorry to say that I have not been able to include any complete poems in translation for you. To translate poetry, you have to be a poet, and I am not. See "For Your Information" for some sources in English and in Spanish.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF SOR JUANA

Mexico City, 23 February 1669. Notary: Joseph de Anaya. This document was discovered in the Archivo de Protocolos, Mexico City, by Lota Spell, long associated with the University of Texas at Austin (Lota Spell, Cuatro documentos relativos a Sor Juana [Mexico City: Imprenta Universitaria, 1947]).

In the name of God our all powerful Lord and of his Blessèd Mother, the Virgin Mary, Our Lady, conceived without stain of original sin, in whom as advocate, shelter, and help of sinners I put my trust.

Be it known to all present that I am Juana Inés de la Cruz, novice of this convent of my father St. Jerome, who in the world was called doña Juana Ramírez de Asbaje, native of the province of Chalco, legitimate daughter of don Pedro de Asbaje y Vargas, deceased, and of doña Isabel Ramírez, his wife, my parents. My lords, considering the brevity of this life and how full it is of cares and dangers, and how honor in the world is fleeting, mutable, and perishable, its pleasures false, its good fortune transitory, how all who travel its course and the tempestuous sea do so with many risks and dangers; and finally how those who go most safely are those who keep seeking the north star of religion, which best assures safe arrival at the port of salvation; and because I have always been inclined to the state of religion in this convent; and since I am close to taking final vows, and it being my willing determination to remain in that state and to dispose of my inheritance and other properties that belong to me, according to the disposition of the holy Council of Trent . . . I requested and was granted permission by the Vicar General of this archbishopric. . . .

Inasmuch as I am free and of sound mind and complete memory, and believing as I believe in the mystery of the Holy Trinity of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and in all that our Holy Mother Roman Catholic Church believes and confesses, in whose faith and beliefs I have lived, will live, and will die, I make and order the following testament:

First, I offer my soul, body, and life to God our Lord, who created it and redeemed it with his precious blood. When his Divine Majesty be pleased to take me, I will be buried in the place where the professed nuns of this convent are customarily sepulchred.

As is customary, I leave as obligatory bequests 2 tomines to each one with whom I divide my property.

I declare that I possess 240 pesos of common gold coins, which Captain Juan Sentis de Chavarría bestowed upon me, and I declare that they are my property and are in the possession of Isabel Ramírez, my mother.

And to carry out and execute this my will and its mandates I name as executrixes and guardians of all my property said doña Isabel Ramírez, my mother, and doña

María and doña Josefa de Asbaje y Vargas, my sisters. To each and any one of them conjointly and singly, the mandates being fulfilled and the debts paid, I name them as guardians of the remainder of all my goods, rights, and transactions which will in the future come into my possession in any way, including by my maternal and paternal inheritance, as well as any other goods which directly or collaterally may come to appertain and belong to me by any legal means, by inheritance or other forms of donation or in any other way.

I designate as my universal heiress doña Isabel Ramírez, my mother and lady, reserving as I of course do the right of usufruct of all that belongs to me all the days of my life to aid in my necessities without said convent being able to acquire any rights, by this contract or any other, to anything I possess, since of course it remains excluded and I hereby so exclude it. If my mother should predecease me, I name in her place as my heiress said doña María de Asbaje y Vargas, my sister, and after her doña Josefa de Asbaje y Vargas, also my sister. . . .

And I declare that the dowry of 3,000 pesos which was delivered to this convent is not part of my legitimate property.

And I hereby annul and revoke any previous testaments.

Mexico City 23 February 1669.

(signed) Juana Inés de la Cruz

Witnesses: Father Antonio Núñez, Society of Jesus; Licenciado Joseph de Lumberia, resident of Mexico City; Juan de Güemes, resident of Mexico City.

Before me, royal notary, Joseph de Anaya.

Permission to make a will, 20 February 1669, granted by Dr. Antonio de Cárdenas y Salazar, canon of the metropolitan cathedral.

SOR JUANA ENDOWED WITH A SLAVE BY HER MOTHER

25 February 1669.

I, Isabel Ramírez, resident of the province of Chalco, widow of don Pedro de Asbaje y Vargas, my husband, and being in this city of Mexico:

I declare that inasmuch as I have always had the intention and deliberate desire to give to doña Juana Ramírez de Asbaje, legitimate daughter of me and my husband, who is at present a professed nun in the convent of St. Jerome, a mulatto woman named Juana de San Joseph, daughter of Francisca de Jesús, also mulatto and my slave, who is in said convent serving her. Since said Inés, my daughter, has been and is a humble, virtuous, and very obedient daughter, and since at present she needs someone to serve and help her . . . I freely give . . . to said doña Juana Ramírez irrevocable legal rights to said mulatto woman, who is about sixteen years old, born and reared in my household . . . to sell her, donate her, or convey her without either said convent or its mayordomo or any other person being able to prevent it or intervene in any way or to claim rights to her.

I do not sign because I cannot write.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF SOR JUANA'S MOTHER

11 January 1687. This document was discovered by a descendent in the National Archives of Mexico and published by him in La familia de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, documentos inéditos, introduction and notes by Guillermo Ramírez España (Mexico City: Imprenta Universitaria, 1947), pp. 12-21. I have brutally excerpted and rearranged this selection for clarity and brevity.

In the name of God Almighty, Amen. I, Doña Isabel Ramírez, resident and farmer [labradora] near the pueblo of Amecameca, in the province of Chalco, legitimate daughter of Pedro Ramírez and Beatriz Ramírez, natives of the kingdoms of Castile, who were residents and farmers of this province and are now deceased:

I, being sick in bed of an illness that God our Lord has given me and in sound mind and memory, believing as I firmly believe in the mystery of the Holy Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, three distinct persons and one true God. And in all that our Holy Mother Roman Catholic Church believes and confesses, in whose faith and beliefs I have lived and professed and will live and die as a Catholic and faithful Christian, and invoking, as I invoke, as my intercessor and advocate the always Virgin Mary our Lady Mother of God conceived in grace from the first instant of her natural being to be my intercessor and advocate with her Most Precious Son, my Lord Jesus Christ, now and in the hour of my death, to pardon me of my sins and errors and put my soul on the course of salvation. And fearing death as is natural in all living things and the uncertainties of this hour, I make and order my testament.

. . . My body is to be interred in the church of Amecameca with a sung mass and vigil if the hour is convenient, and, if not, a mass is to be sung another day, to be paid for by my estate.

One hundred masses shall be said for my soul and a hundred more for the souls of my parents and all the souls in Purgatory, to be paid for by my estate.

Two reales each for the redeeming of captives in Jerusalem, for the canonization of the venerable Gregorio López, to the shrines of Guadalupe and the Virgin of Remedios, outside the walls of the city of Mexico.

Four reales of silver for my heirs.

PROPERTY

This hacienda and house, called Panoayan, on the outskirts of Amecameca, is rented from the convent for 200 pesos a year for three lives. I, possessing it in the second life, name my daughter María de Asbaje to complete the third life.

Slaves: Sons of my mulatto slave woman, now deceased: Diego, aged 28; Manuel, aged 26; Francisco, aged 24. And María, my mulatto slave girl, aged 9.

CHILDREN AND BEQUESTS

I declare that I have been a spinster all my life and have had as my natural children:

With Pedro de Asbaje y Vargas Machuca, native of Villa de Vergara, Guipúzcoa:

doña JOSEFA MARIA (now widow of José de Paredes). I gave to her for her dowry a mulatto woman slave named Beatriz, about 15; she died, having borne two daughters, one named María, now 14, the other named Francisca, now about 10. These daughters I leave to doña Josefa.

doña MARIA DE ASBAJE--virgin and spinster--is to be paid 300 pesos in gold for her dowry.

Madre JUANA DE LA CRUZ--nun of St. Jerome. I gave her no dowry and she has renounced her share of my estate. I gave her one mulatto slave woman named Juana to serve her.

Natural children I had with Captain Diego Ruíz Lozano, native of Cholula, who was legally married to Catalina Maldonado Zapata:

don DIEGO RUIZ LOZANO EL MOZO--married to doña María Paz de Anunsarri. I gave him a mulatto slave named José, worth 300 pesos.

doña ANTONIA RUIZ LOZANO--married to don Juan de la Nobela, residing here. I gave her no dowry. If it is possible after this year's harvest, she should be paid 300 pesos in gold for her dowry. If not now, later.

doña INES RUIZ LOZANO--married to don José Miguel de Torres. I gave her a mulatto slave named Francisco worth 300 pesos, for her dowry. Don José returned the boy to me, and I gave him 300 pesos.

I name don Diego Ruíz Lozano El Mozo as the executor of this estate.

I name my children as my universal heirs, share and share alike.

DEBTS

to the heirs of doña María Velázquez Robledo Monte Rey, 40 pesos for the 40 fanegas [a fanega was about 1.5 bushels] of corn I borrowed from her.

to the estate of Juan de Sigüenza, farmer of this province, 50 pesos.

to the Cathedral of Mexico, 114 fanegas of corn for the tithe at 9 reales and 1/2 tomín the fanega.

to don Antonio de Arana, of the pueblo of Aiosingo, money for the purchase of eight young bulls at five pesos each.

to someone from Cabrera, a traveling man, ten pesos; if he cannot be found, twenty masses should be said for his soul.

to Don Diego Ruíz Zenteno, farmer of this province, 33 pesos for the money he lent me.

to José de Sabala, administrator of the butcher shops of Amecameca, for supplying me with a weekly supply of meat, at 4 reales a week, all the weeks of last year.

to the sons of Matías Ramírez, my deceased brother, 100 pesos left to their father by my deceased nephew, Dr. José de la Mata, cleric and presbyter.

to Diego Ramírez, my nephew and a farmer of this province, 20 pesos for some pearls I bought, I having paid one hundred of the 120 pesos they cost to a merchant in Mexico City.

to Nicolás González, of Amecameca, my nephew, I have set aside 120 fanegas of corn to repay him for some provisions.

to Dr. Don Juan de Narváez y Saavedra, prebend of the Cathedral of Mexico. I owe him for 5 canoes of corn, each canoe holding 60 fanegas. He should be repaid in kind.

CONCLUSION

No one owes me anything.

I hereby revoke any previous wills.

I do not sign my name because I do not know how to write.

Witnesses: Juan de Iñigo, Dr. Antonio de Albritur, Juan Bautista Quiñones, José de Torres, Pedro Ilanclain.

Hacienda de Panoayan, Pueblo of Amecameca, Province of Chalco, 11 January 1687.

Note: Isabel Ramírez Santillana died a spinster on 3 January 1688.

THE BISHOP OF PUEBLA CHASTISES SOR JUANA

25 November 1690. "Carta de la muy ilustra señora Sor Philotea de la Cruz que se imprimió con licencia del Ilmo. y Exmo. señor don Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, obispo de la ciudad de Puebla a Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz," Fama y obras póstumas, tomo tercero, del fénix de México y décima musa (Barcelona, 1701).

My Lady:

I have seen your letter wherein you attacked the assumptions with which Father Antonio de Vieyra discussed Christ in his sermon, with such subtlety that to the most erudite it seemed like another Eagle of Ezekiel, surpassing its own unique talent and following in the footsteps of the illustrious César Meneses, architect of the foundations of Portugal. In my judgment, anyone who read your Apologia could never deny your talent, even after the most minute scrutiny of the comparison. Anyone would praise such refutations in a woman who is an honor to her sex. I, at least, admired the liveliness of the thought, the careful choice of evidence, and the forceful clarity which makes the thesis convincing and inseparably a companion to wisdom.

The first word God pronounced was "Light," because without enlightenment, wisdom has no voice. Further, the word of Christ when he spoke of the most elevated mysteries through the veils of the Parables was not considered admirable by the world, and only when he spoke clearly did he merit the acclaim of knowing all. This is one of the many gifts you owe to God, for clarity of thought is not acquired by work and industry; rather, it is a gift which enters the soul drop by drop.

I had this paper printed so that you can read it more easily and so that you may realize the treasure that God has put into your soul for safekeeping and so that you may be better understood and admired, for gratitude and understanding come from the same act of birth. And if, as you say in your letter, the one who has received the most from God has the greater obligation to communicate, I fear you may find yourself greatly obliged to do so: for few living things owe to God's Majesty so many great natural talents as you have to be thankful for. And if up to now you have employed them well (as I ought to believe of one who is a nun), in the future you must use them even better.

My judgment is not so severe a censor as to say that verses are wrong, when you have been so celebrated and, after St. Teresa, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, and other saints who have made holy this talent by their own verses, since you have been almost canonized for yours. But I would wish you to imitate them, in meter as well as in the choice of subject matter. I do not approve of the grossness of those who reprove women for writing, for so many of them have chosen to apply themselves to that study and not without the praise of St. Jerome. It is true, as St. Paul says, that women cannot preach, but he does not forbid women from studying or from wanting to find

things out. He only wanted to protect us from risk of the sin of pride, since our sex is so prone to vanity.

From Sarai, God in his divine wisdom took away one letter of her name and gave it to Abram, not because the man must have more than the woman (as many believe) but because "i" added to Sara meant "tumor" or "puffed up" as well as domination. "Sarai" meant "Your Ladyship," and it was not right that she who was subject to Abram be Lady in that house. God does not will that a woman use learning to engender pride. But the Apostle does not reprove learning as long as it does not remove the woman from the state of obedience. Everyone knows that study and learning have sustained you in the state of service and subjection and that they have helped you perfect excellence in being obedient. Still, if other nuns sacrifice their will to obedience, think of the holocaust--brighter, hotter, more pleasing to God--that your understanding would make as a sacrifice on the altars of religion.

I do not intend by this that you should still your genius by giving up books but rather that you should improve it by sometimes reading of Jesus Christ. None of the evangelists called the genealogy of Christ a book until St. Matthew, and it is because when he was converted he did not will to mute his talent but rather to improve it. Before, when he was a publican, he busied himself with books, deals, and business ventures. When he became an Apostle, his genius improved, transforming the books of his ruin into the Gospel of Christ. You have spent a great deal of time in the study of worldly philosophers and poets. Now it may be that you will seek to perfect the tasks you set for yourself and to improve your selection of the books you read. What people have been more erudite than the Egyptians? There the first alphabet of the world began, and hieroglyphs were marveled at. However profound was the learning of Joseph, and Sacred Scripture calls him erudite in the wisdom of the Egyptians, the Holy Spirit proclaims outright that the Egyptians were barbarous. All their knowledge, which could predict the movements of the stars and the heavens, could not brake the unruliness of the passions. All their science was intended to perfect man in his political life, but it did not show men how to achieve eternal life; all their science could not serve to enlighten them about salvation. God, all-knowing, called their science stupid. This is the way Justus Lipsius felt when, retired from his erudition and being close to death (when the understanding is illuminated), his friends tried to console him by reminding him of the many books that he had written. He said, pointing to the Crucifix, "A science which does not come from the Crucified is stupid and only vanity."

I do not mean to reprove you by recalling the lesson of these authors, but I say to you what Gerlon counselled, Do not be blinded; do not let yourself be robbed by these studies. Human letters are slaves and are wont to take advantage of Divine ones, but they must be reproached if they rob human understanding of Divine Wisdom, making ladies of those destined to be servants. They are commendable only when curiosity, which is a vice, becomes serious study, which is a virtue. Angels beat St. Jerome

because he was reading Cicero, for, since he preferred Cicero's eloquence to the solidity of sacred scripture, he was being dense, knavish, almost slavish. Worthy of praise, this sainted doctor took advantage of what he read in profane learning.

You have spent no little time on these curious sciences. Move on, now, like the great Boethius, to more beneficial studies, joining to the subtleties of natural philosophy the usefulness of a moral philosophy. What a pity it is that such a great mind should lower itself to the mean and vile works of earth to the point that it does not wish to penetrate what is happening in Heaven. And since it debases itself by staying on the ground, beware it does not sink lower, considering what happens in Hell. If the mind seeks sometimes sweet and tender intelligence, let it be applied to a study of Calvary, where seeing the greatness of the Redeemer and the ingratitude of the redeemed, it would find a great field on which to ponder the excesses of an Infinite Love and would write Apologies, not without tears, for the ungratefulness that brings it there. Or that rich galleon of your genius might set sail, usefully again, on the high seas of divine Perfection. I do not doubt that you would have an experience like that of Apelles, who was tracing a portrait of Campaspe; as many lines as he drew on the canvas with his brush, the same amount of arrows made wounds in his heart. The portrait was being perfected while the heart of the painter was being mortally wounded at the same time by his love for the authentic original.

I am very certain and sure that if you, with the lively rational working of your mind, would formulate and paint an idea of Divine Perfection (as clearly as the shadows of faith would permit), you would also find your soul illuminated and your will seared; and being sweetly wounded by the love of God, you would not oblige the Lord, who has so abundantly showered you with natural gifts in this world, to concede to you only negative benefits in the world to come. Though you may call them successes, I interpret them to be chastisements, for the only thing that is really a benefit is what God does to the human heart, disciplining it with his grace to please himself, providing a sure remedy which, if Divine Liberality is not repressed, will surely make it better.

This, she, who from afar kissed your hand so many years ago, desires for you; she, who from that time on has loved your soul. Distance and time cannot cool this spiritual love that does not weaken or pale from the assaults of change or recognize as pure anything that does not develop.

May God's Majesty hear my supplications and make you very saintly and bless you.

SOR PHILOTEA DE LA CRUZ

From this convent of Santísima Trinidad in Puebla de los Angeles.
25 November 1690.

SOR JUANA REPLIES TO THE BISHOP

1 March 1691. Excerpts translated from Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Obras escogidas (Mexico City, Buenos Aires: Espasa Calpe, 1938), pp. 131-177 passim.

Very Illustrious Madam, My Lady:

Neither my will nor my poor health and my justifiable fear have held up my reply for so many days. How could they, if at the first step my pen broke on two impossible things? The first (and for me the most important and exacting) is finding out how to respond to your very erudite, very discreet, very saintly, and most loving letter. And I see how the Angel of the Scholastics, St. Thomas Aquinas, responded when they asked him why he was so silent before his teacher, Albert the Great. He replied, "Because I do not know how to say anything worthy of Albert." With much more justification I should be still, not only from humility, like the saint, but also because I really do not know anything worthy of you. The second impossibility is knowing how to thank you so very much for the unexpected favor you did me by sending my scribbles to the press, a kindness so unalloyed that it passed beyond my most ambitious hope and my most fantastic desire. . . .

Why me? Why, reverend lady, such a great favor for me? By chance am I more than a poor nun, the most minimal creature in the world, and the least worthy to occupy your attention? . . . It is not pretended modesty, my lady, but guileless, heartfelt truth, that when I took the published copy of the "Carta Atenagórica" in my hands, I burst into tears of confusion (something I do not do easily), because it seemed to me that your favor was nothing more than an obligation which God imposes in order to chastise me. Other people are corrected by punishments, but me He seeks to reduce by rewards, a special favor by which I know myself to be His debtor, as in infinite other graces from His immense bounty. But He also has another special way of embarrassing and confusing me, which is an even more clever way of punishing me, and that is to let me do it myself, to let me with all my faculties be the judge who sentences me and condemns my gratitude. When I consider all this, here alone, I am wont to say: God bless you, Lord, who not only will not let another living thing judge me, but also will not let me judge myself. Rather, you reserve that right for yourself. You liberate me from myself and from the sentence I would pronounce upon me. Forced by my own conclusions, the sentence could be nothing less than condemnation. In your mercy, you guard it for yourself, for you love me more than I can love myself.

* * * * *

I do not study in order to be able to write and even less to be able to teach, which seems to me like exaggerating one's own importance in an overbearing manner. Rather, I study to see if by studying I might become less ignorant. . . .

. . . Although it may be used against me, God has given me the gift of a very profound love of truth. Since I was first struck by the lightning flash of reason, my propensity for learning was so strong and so powerful that neither outside censure (and I have had much) nor my own second thoughts (and I have had not few) have been able to stop me from pursuing this natural impulse which God put within me. Only His Majesty knows why and for what. And He knows that I have prayed that He would quench the light of my understanding, leaving only enough to keep the Law, for anything else is superfluous (according to some) in a woman. There are even those who say it is harmful.

God also knows that, not succeeding in putting it out, I have tried to bury my understanding with my name and sacrifice it all to Him who gave it to me, and that for no other reason did I become a nun, even though the solitude and quiet my studies required made the daily routine and the assembly of a religious community repugnant to me. Afterward, the Lord knows and a man who had to know found out how much I tried to hide my name. He would not permit it, saying that it was temptation, and he was right.

If I could pay you something of what I owe you, my lady, I think it would be in telling you all this, for it has never left my mouth before, except in confession. I want to open wide to you the doors of my heart and make you party to my most hidden secrets. . . .

Continuing the story of my love of learning (of which I want to tell you all, entirely), I say that I was but three years old when my mother sent my older sister to be taught reading from a woman in a kind of school they call Amigas. Mischievously, affectionately, I went with her, and watching her do the lesson, I burned with the desire to learn how to read, and I sought to deceive the teacher by telling her, "My mother wanted you to teach me, too." Since that was incredible, she did not believe me, but to humor me she gave me a lesson. I continued to go and she continued to teach me, no longer in jest but in earnest. I learned so quickly that by the time my mother found out, I knew how to read, for the teacher had kept it a secret in order to break the pleasant news to her and receive her reward at the same time. I had kept it quiet, believing that they would beat me for doing it without their permission. She who taught me, God bless her, is still alive and can swear to it.

I remember that in those days, even though I had the healthy appetite characteristic of ordinary children of that age, I stopped eating cheese because I heard that it made one dull-witted, and in me the desire to learn was stronger than the desire to eat, though ordinarily hunger is the more powerful drive in children.

By the time I was six or seven, I already knew how to read and write as well as how to sew and keep house and all the other skills women learn. I heard tell that in Mexico City there was a university and schools where sciences were studied. No sooner had I heard this than I began to badger my mother with insistent, inconvenient pleas to let me put on men's clothing and go to Mexico City, where I could live with

some relatives and study and attend the university. She would not let me do it (and quite rightly), but I fulfilled my desire by reading the many and varied books that belonged to my grandfather, and neither punishments nor rebukes could stop me. Thus, when I came to Mexico City, people admired not so much my genius as my memory and the knowledge that I had at an age when it seemed I had had barely time enough to learn how to talk.

I began to study Latin grammar--I think I took no more than twenty lessons. So intense was my concentration that, although women (especially in the flower of youth) usually cherish the natural beauty of their hair, I would cut my hair off, four or six fingers' length, threatening myself that if I had not mastered such-and-such by the time it grew back, I would cut it off again in punishment for being stupid. It happened that the hair grew quickly but I learned slowly, and so I cut it off to punish my stupidity. It did not seem reasonable to me that a person's head should be crowned with hair if it were so bald of knowledge, which to me was a more desirable adornment.

I became a nun because--although I knew the religious life imposed obligations (I mean the incidentals, not the basics) very repugnant to my temperament--all in all, considering my total disinclination for marriage [la total negación que tenía al matrimonio], it was the least unsuitable and most decent way of life I could choose, in terms of the security, which I wanted, of my own salvation. The first thing I had to do was to curb and subdue my impertinent and wayward self, who wanted to live alone and have no obligatory tasks which would interfere with the freedom of my studies and no community noises to disturb the soothing silence of my books. This made me waver in my determination until certain learned persons explained to me that it was temptation, and, with divine grace, I overcame it and took the veil, which I now wear so unworthily. I thought I had escaped myself, but--miserable me!--I had brought myself with me, and I had brought my worst enemy--this love of learning. I cannot determine whether Heaven gave me the love of knowledge as a reward or as a punishment, for even though I sought to put it out and repress it with the many spiritual exercises Religion offers, it would burst forth like a gunshot, sure proof that in me deprivation stimulates the appetite.

I returned to my studies (no, I said it wrong, for I had never stopped)--I continued, I mean, my studious tasks (which for me were my rest and recreation in all the intervals I had free from obligation), reading and more reading, studying and more studying, with no other teacher than the books themselves. It is easy to see how hard it is to study those lifeless lines when one is denied the living voice and interpretation of the teacher; but all this labor I suffered joyfully, for the love of learning. Oh, if it had only been for the love of God, as was suitable, how worthy it would have been! Of course, I sought to elevate it as much as I could and dedicate it to God's service, because my aspiration was to study Theology, for it seemed to me a censurable

clumsiness in a Catholic not to know all that in this life can be learned naturally about the Divine Mysteries; and, too, since I was a nun and not a lay person, it seemed to me that I owed it to my profession to study literature. Moreover, being a daughter of St. Jerome and St. Paula, it would be degenerate to be the idiot child of such learned parents. I explained it to myself this way, and I thought it was right; though (most certainly) I was only encouraging and rewarding what I already wanted to do, justifying my own desire by calling it an obligation. And so I continued, always directing the steps of my studying to the heights of Sacred Theology. It seemed to me necessary, in order to reach such heights, to climb the stairsteps of human sciences and arts, for how should I understand the language of the queen of sciences if I could not understand the languages of her handmaidens?

How, without Logic, could I know the abstract and specific rules by which Sacred Scripture was written? How, without Rhetoric, might I understand the patterns, figures of speech, and graceful style of fine discourse and writing? How, without Physics, might I apprehend so many natural questions about the nature of animals or of sacrifices that have so many symbolic meanings, some explicit and many others that remain hidden? How can I decide whether the innate pulse and virtue of Music or a supernatural power God bestowed upon David cured Saul when he heard the sound of David's harp? How, without Mathematics, can one understand so many computations of time--in years, in days, in months, in hours, in mysterious hebdomads [groups of seven], like Daniel's, and others whose meaning is clear only to one who understands the nature, concordances, and properties of numbers? How, without Geometry, can one measure the holy Ark of the Testament and the holy city of Jerusalem, whose mysterious measurements form a cube with all its dimensions and that division is proportional to all its parts and is so marvelous? How, without Architecture, the great Temple of Solomon, where God himself was the master builder who drew up the specifications and the blueprint and the Wise King was only the engineer who carried it out--where there was no column's base without its mystery, no column without its symbol, no cornice without its allusion, no architrave without significance--and so on, in each and every part of it, until even the smallest fillet [circular ornamental portion at the base of a column] not only served an engineering function and as an adornment but also symbolized more important things? How without extensive knowledge of the generalizations and facts which constitute history can one understand the historical Books of the Bible? Those recapitulations which often place at the end of a narrative an event which really happened first? How, without extensive knowledge of both secular and ecclesiastical law, can the Legal Books be understood? How, without great erudition, can one understand the many episodes of profane history that are mentioned in Sacred Scripture? The customs of the Gentiles? Their rites? So many different ways of speaking?

How, without studying the precepts and lessons of the Church Fathers, can one

understand the obscure teaching of the prophets? Without being very expert in Music, how can one understand those musical proportions and variations which abound in so many places, particularly in those petitions Abraham made to God on behalf of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah: "Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city; wilt thou also destroy it and not spare the place . . .? Wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five . . .?

> The lowering of the number of the righteous from 50 to 45 is a sesquinone and is as mi is to re. [10/9, a major second. This is a dissonant.]
>
> From there to 40 is a sesquioctave, as re is to ut. [9/8, classic Pythagorean. Sor Juana said as re is to mi, but my experts think she made a mistake.]
>
> From there to 30 is a sesquiteria, which is a Diatessaron [the interval of a fourth, 4/3].
>
> From there to 20, which is the proportion sesquialtera, which is the Diapente [the perfect fifth, 3/2].
>
> From there to 10 is the dupla, which is the Diapson [the regular octave, 2/1].

As there are no more harmonic proportions [of intervals of five], does it end there? How can anyone know this without Music?

In the Book of Job, God says, "Canst thou bind the sweet ethereal fluids of the Pleiades or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season; or guide Arcturus with his sons?" It would be impossible to understand these terms without the knowledge of Astrology. And it is not only the noble sciences, for there is no skilled mechanical trade that is not mentioned. En fin, as the Bible contains all books, so Theology contains all the sciences, and all of them contribute to the understanding of the One. Once all are mastered (and this is not easy or even possible), another requirement is imposed, greater than all the others, and that is continual prayer and purity of life, which pray to God for that purge of spirit and illumination of mind which is required for the understanding of such elevated knowledge. If this last falters, all else is useless.

* * * * *

. . . What I can be accused of is of not having taken advantage of my studies because of my ineptness and the debility of my understanding. It is not the fault of studying too many different things. What I really can be accused of is the aggregate of the work itself, not just in lacking a teacher but in lacking fellow students to discuss and debate the subject, in having only a silent book for a teacher and an insensitive inkwell for a fellow-student, and, instead of explanation and drill, only many interruptions, not just those of my religious obligations (for I had already realized how useful and profitable a way of spending time they were), but rather those

activities that go on within a community. I would be reading, and in the next cell they would be singing and playing music; and two servants would have a fight and come to have me settle it; I would be writing, and a woman friend would come to call on me, doing me a very bad turn with the very best of intentions. It is necessary not only to admit the difficulty but also to be grateful for it, and this goes on continuously because the only free time I set apart for study is that which is left over after regular community activities, and those who have the same time free are the very ones who come in to disturb me. The only people who can understand the truth of what I am saying are those who have experienced community life [la vida común]. Only the force of my vocation and the great love which exists between me and my beloved sisters can reconcile the distance between the antagonistic poles of my natural inclination and community life.

* * * * *

Among other benefits, I owe to God a bland and affable nature, and the nuns love me a lot for it (without forgetting my many faults), and they like my company. Realizing this and moved by the great love I feel for them . . . I am wont to go to them during recreation to console them and enjoy their conversation. One time I needed to work, and I made a vow not to go to anyone's cell unless obedience or charity obliged me to; because, without this strong brake, love would burst out. And I made this vow for a month or two weeks, knowing my weakness. When it was over, and after one or two days of truce, I started to renew my break with them (not studying has never been restful to me). They considered me shrewish, shy, and ungrateful, as a person who did not deserve the closeness of my affectionate sisters.

* * * * *

. . . I confess that I find myself very far from wisdom and that I have wished to follow it, even from afar. But all this has brought me to the fire of persecution and to the crucible of torment; and it has gone to such an extreme that they have even asked that I should be prohibited from my studies.

At one time they persuaded a very saintly and guileless abbess, who, believing that study was a matter for the Inquisition, forbade my studying. I obeyed her (for the three months or so that she had authority over me) and did not touch a book; but as for the absolute ban on study, even though I did not study in books, I studied everything that God had created, and all the universal machine served me as alphabet and textbook. I saw nothing without reflecting upon it; everything I heard moved me to thought. This was true of the smallest and most material things, for since there is no creature, however lonely, in which one does not discover the Creator's hand, so there is no object that will not stimulate thought, if one considers it as one should. Thus I looked at and wondered about everything admiringly, so that even the people I spoke to, and what they said to me, aroused a thousand speculations in me. How did such a variety of temperaments and intellects come about, when we are all of

the same species? If I saw a design, I would consider the proportion of its lines and measure it in my mind and reduce it to other figures. Sometimes I would walk about in the front part of a dormitory of ours (a very spacious room). I noticed that although the lines of its two sides were parallel and the ceiling was level, the lines seemed to run toward each other and the ceiling seemed to be lower at a distance than if it was close by--from which I inferred that visual lines run straight but not parallel, except when they go to form a pyramidal figure. And I speculated whether this could be the reason that made the ancients wonder whether the world was round or not--because, although it appeared spherical, this might be an optical illusion, presenting concavities where they perhaps did not exist.

This way of scrutinizing everything occurred to me, as it always does, without my having any control in the matter. Before, I used to get angry because my head was tired. I believed that that happened to everyone, as the making of verses did, until experience showed me that it was just the opposite. And now this habit is so intensely a part of me that I can see nothing without reflecting upon it. I noticed two little girls playing with a top, and I had hardly glimpsed the movement and the object before I began, with my usual madness, to consider the easy motion of a sphere--and how the impulse to move, once given, continued independently of its cause, for there was the top dancing at a distance from the hand of the girl who had set it spinning. Not content with this, I had some flour brought and strewn on the floor, in order to find out whether the top's spinning traced perfect circles or not; and I discovered that they were only spiral lines that lost their circular shape gradually as the impulse diminished. Other children were playing at pins (which is the most infantile game children play). I began to study the figures which the pins formed. Seeing, by chance, that three pins formed a triangle, I set about joining one to the other, remembering that this is said to have been the shape of the mysterious ring of Solomon, in which were depicted shadowy hints and manifestations of the most Sacred Trinity, by virtue of which it worked many miracles. It is said that David's harp had the same form; for this reason Saul was healed by its sound. The harps we use today have almost the same shape.

But what shall I say, my lady, of the secrets of nature that I have discovered while cooking? I observe that an egg coheres and fries in lard or oil but breaks up in sugar syrup; that to keep sugar fluid it is sufficient to pour on it a little water containing a quince or some other sour fruit; that the yolk and white of an egg are so opposed that each one separately will mix with sugar, but not both together. I shall not weary you with such trifles, which I mention only to give you an adequate notion of my character, and which, I am sure, will make you laugh; but, my lady, what can we women know except kitchen philosophy? Lupercio Leonardo aptly said, "It is possible to philosophize while preparing dinner." And I often say, observing these trifles, "If Aristotle had been a cook, he would have written much more."

Continuing the description of my way of thinking, I tell you that it is so constant in me that I do not need any books. Once, when I had stomach trouble, the doctors forbade me my studying, and I passed several days without reading. Then I told them it was less harmful to give me the books, for my cogitations were so strong and vehement that they consumed more of my spirit in a quarter of an hour than the study of books would in four days; and so they let me read. Moreover, my lady, not even in slumber was my mind freed from the continual activity of my imagination; on the contrary, it tends to operate more freely and unencumbered, conferring more clarity and sense on things left over from the day; debating, making verses, I could make you a long catalog (with its justifications and elaborations) of all the thoughts I think better asleep than awake; but I leave it so as not to bore you, since enough has been said, given your penetrating understanding, to comprehend everything about my nature and the beginnings, means, and ends of my studies.

If all this were meretorious (as I observe it is in men), it would not be so in me, for I work out of an inner compulsion. If it is culpable, I am not to blame for the same reason; for withall, I have lived my life with such lack of confidence in myself that I do not trust my own judgment in this or anything else; so I pass decision-making power to God's sovereign talent, submitting myself then to His sentence, without contradicting or feeling repugnance, for this is nothing more than a simple narration of my propensity for learning.

I confess, too, that this being the case (as I have explained), I had no need of exemplary models; still, the many I have read about, in both divine writings and the humanities, have never stopped helping me.

For I have seen a Deborah giving laws, both military and political, and governing a people who had so many learned men. I read of that sage Queen of Sheba, so learned that she dared to test with riddles the wisdom of the wisest of men and suffered no reproof for it but instead was made the judge of unbelievers. I observe so many illustrious women--some adorned with the gift of prophecy, like Abigail; others, with the gift of persuasion, like Esther; others with piety, like Rahab; others with perseverance, like Anna, mother of Samuel; and an infinite number of others, endowed with still other kinds of graces and virtues.

If I turn my gaze to the pagans, I first encounter the Sibyls, chosen by God to prophesy the principal mysteries of our faith, in verses so learned and elegant that they arouse our wonder. I see the Greeks adore as goddess of learning a woman like Minerva, daughter of the first Jupiter and teacher of all the wisdom of Athens. I see Pola Argentaria, who aided her husband Lucan to write the great "Battle of Pharsalia." I see the daughter of the divine Tiresius, wiser than her father. I see Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, as wise as she was brave. An Arete, the most learned daughter of Aristippus. A Nicostrata, inventor of Latin letters and most accomplished

in Greek. An Aspasia of Miletus, who taught philosophy and rhetoric and was the teacher of the philosopher Pericles. A Hypatia, who taught astronomy and studied for a long time in Alexandria. A Leontia, of Greek birth, who challenged the philosopher Theophrastus and convinced him. A Julia, a Corinna, a Cornelia, and finally all that multitude of women who won renown under the names of Greeks, Muses, Pythias, and in the end were nothing more than educated women, regarded and venerated as such by the ancients. Not to mention an infinite number of others of whom books tell, such as the Egyptian Catherine, who not only read but overcame in debate the wisest sages of Egypt. I see a Gertrude study, write, and teach.

And there is no need to wander far afield, for I see a holy mother of my own order, Paula, learned in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and most skillful in interpreting the Scriptures--so much so, in fact, that her biographer, the great and saintly Jerome, declared himself unequal to his task. He said, in his usual, forceful way:

> If all the members of my body were tongues,
> they would not be enough to proclaim the
> wisdom and virtue of Paula.

He bestowed the same praise on the widow Blesilla and the virtuous virgin Eustoquia, both daughters of the same Paula; for her learning Paula won the name "Prodigy of the World." Fabiola, a Roman matron, wrote an elegant work in Virgilian measures about the mysteries of our sacred faith. It is well known that our Queen Isabel, wife of Alfonso X, wrote on astronomy. . . . In our own time there flourishes the great Christina Alexandra, Queen of Sweden, as learned as she is brave and magnanimous, and there are also the excellent Duchess of Abreyo and the Countess of Villa Umbrosa.

The venerable Dr. Arce (worthy professor of scripture by dint of his virtue and his learning) in his scholarly Bibliorum posed this question: Is it lawful for a woman to read the Bible and interpret it? . . . At last he decided, prudently, that reading in universities and preaching in pulpits were forbidden; but studying, writing, and teaching privately were not only allowable but very beneficial and useful. It is clear that this does not mean all women, but only the ones God has granted special virtue and prudence to and who would be very mature and erudite and have the talent and the natural capacity necessary for such a saintly employment. This is so true that not only women (who are considered incompetent) but also men (who think that they can be wise by only being male) would be prohibited from studying Sacred Texts unless they were very learned and virtuous, docile, and right-minded. . . .

. . . If some parents wish to educate their daughters above the ordinary, necessity and the lack of the wise women of the ancients forces them to bring in men to teach the girls how to figure, how to play instruments, and other skills. No little harm comes from this, as is seen every day in sad examples of unequal marriages. . . . Thus many would rather leave their daughters uneducated and uncultured rather than ex-

pose them to a notorious danger like familiarity with men. This would not be a problem if there were wise women of the ancients available. As St. Paul counseled, some would be judges and others would do the customary tasks. Because what is the harm in having a wise woman of the ancients, learned in letters and saintly discourse and customs, to undertake the education of young maidens?

* * * * *

. . . If my crime is in the "Carta Atenagórica," was it something more than revealing my feelings backed up by all the authorities of our Holy Mother Church? If it is in that letter, I cannot be censured. Would they forbid others to do the same thing? To hold an opinion contrary to Vieira was very bold of me. Was it not bold of him to hold it against three holy Church Fathers? Is not my understanding, after all, as free as his? . . . Is one of the dogmas of the Holy Faith revealed in his interpretation, so that we must believe it with our eyes closed? . . .

Where shall I go from here, my lady?

* * * * *

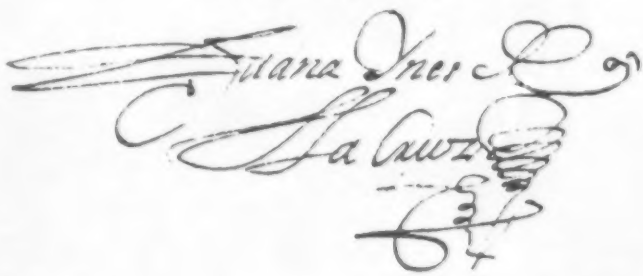
. . . I confess openly my ruination and vileness, but I swear I have never written an indecent verse. Furthermore, I have never written anything because I wanted to but only to satisfy outside petitions and commands. . . .

I can assure you that malicious, false accusations have sometimes mortified me, but they have never injured me. . . . It is like those who do not wish to resign themselves to dying, but at last they die, anyway. Their resistance did not save them from death but only kept from them the merit of resignation. They died a bad death when it could have been a good death. . . .

* * * * *

From this convent of our father St. Jerome in Mexico City, the first day of the month of March, 1691.

BVM. Your very grateful



A FRAGMENT OF POETRY

En dos partes dividida
Tengo el alma en confusión:
Una, esclava a la pasión
y otra a la razón medida.

Divided in two parts
My soul is rent by conflict:
One, a slave to passion
And the other to tempered reason.

Note: Now you see why I can't translate Sor Juana's poetry for you. I can show you the meaning, but I can't convey to you the form. Sor Juana's quatrain is the beginning of a sonnet; the rhymes are ABBA. But note, in the last line, razón: that is an internal rhyme of B. The form is elegant and disciplined.

Irving Leonard, in Baroque Times in Old Mexico, suggests that there was another source of inner conflict for Sor Juana besides the civil war between passion and reason. He thinks she was torn between two ideologies, "two methodologies of reason," churchly scholasticism, based on faith, miracle, and authority, and the critical, experimental discipline of a dawning age of science and reason.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

1. These definitions may help you:

Renting for three lives. We would say, "leasehold for 99 years." The opposite of leasehold is fee simple, a land tenure system that allows you to own land outright, "forever," and add to it or subdivide it or sell it as you please. The Ramírez family is allowed to reside on and plant and reap the harvests of the land for three generations. Then the land reverts to the Church (which may increase the annual rent and let them continue living there).

Usufruct. The right to use something that someone else owns. The Ramírez family has usufruct of the Hacienda Panoayan.

El Mozo. Junior. Or boy, as in John-Boy.

Viceroy. "Vice-king," the government career bureaucrat named by the king of Spain to be the executive in charge of legislative, judicial, and military affairs and economic development. A subjugated area ruled by a viceroy is called a kingdom and not a province or colony.

Vicereine. The viceroy's wife. Do I need to remind you that no woman ever ruled a kingdom in America?

Tithe. A tax paid to a Church institution. Christians are obliged to pay one-tenth of their annual income to the Church. In Mexico tithes were paid to cathedrals in cash or in kind.

2. Pythagorean harmonics, "the music of the spheres," is the basis for Sor Juana's paragraph on the rhythmic proportions produced when musical notes are endowed with arithmetic numbers. I was amazed when I first encountered this, because I could not imagine how anyone could ever match a note to a number. After several jolting put-downs and glances of pity because I was so retarded, my experts gently explained that you could do it because the Greeks did it, because Pythagorus did it first and made it authoritative. Our medievalist, Weldon Ernest, identified this as a Pythagorean concept and gave me an article in Speculum that shows how doctors in the Middle Ages used numbers, notes, and harmonics to search for the "musical pulse" that had curative powers. Our classicist, Michael Spiedel, identified "sesqui" as 1 1/2 and corrected the spelling of Latin and Greek terms. He also observed that the first line was dissonant.

Lewis Rowell, one of the most distinguished musical theorists in the U.S., supplied the numerical proportions and defined the terms. He suggested using ut (do) in the second line because it is the classic Pythagorean basis of harmony. Edgar Knowlton of the Spanish department had suggested previously that Sor Juana must have made an error when she wrote mi. Rowell noted that these proportions of the fifth are called "superparticular ratios" and were considered the most perfect of musical intervals because they cannot be divided in half. In these proportions the numerator is larger by one than the denominator. Dr. Rowell observed that Sor Juana's paragraph on the intervals of five was cute and correct but very elementary.

3. If you want to read in English and would like to go on studying Sor Juana, the best thing I ever read was "A Baroque Poetess" in Irving Leonard's Baroque Times in Old Mexico (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1966), pp. 172-192, 240-242. He, her intellectual biographer, translates a number of Sor Juana's poems. Fanchón Royer wrote The Tenth Muse (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1952). His is a very admiring account of Sor Juana, with a full-text translation of the "Carta Atenagórica." If you have come to enjoy the unweaving of bias, wait until you see his attitude on educating women (p. 5) and on Church people who persuaded Sor Juana to "stop thinking" (passim). In 1925 Dorothy Schons (of the University of Texas at Austin) called Sor Juana "The First Feminist in the New World" (Equal Rights, Oct. 21, 1925). In the "Lost Women" section of Ms. magazine, Judith Thurman wrote "Sister Juana: The Price of Genius" (April 1973), pp. 4-21. Irene Nicholson translated most of a poem by Sor Juana, "Hombres necios que acusáis a la mujer sin razón," a protest against a double standard of sexual propriety, in A Guide to Mexican Poetry (Mexico City: Editorial Minutiae Mexicana, 1968), pp. 46-48.

4. In Spanish you can read whatever you want. If you want to read everything or find anything, try the superb four-volume Obras completas, published by Latin America's most distinguished press, the Fondo de Cultura Económica in Mexico City (1951-1957). The Mexican scholar Emilio Abreu Gómez has studied Sor Juana's life, library, and writings and has collected her poetry and the dialogue between her and the bishop in four volumes, published in Mexico City from 1938-1940 with different titles. A sympathetic treatment is Anita Arroyo's Razón y pasión de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (Mexico City: Porrúa y Obregón, 1952). If you want to read the contemporary account of Sor Juana by her priest-biographer, Diego Calleja, S.J., it is in Fama y obras póstumas, tomo tercero del fénix de México y dézima musa (Barcelona, 1701). (I found it in the Rare Books Room of the Nettie Lee Benson Collection at The University of Texas at Austin.) The gentle, poetical appreciation of a fellow-poet makes Amado Nervo's Juana de Asbaje (La Plata, Argentina: Calomino, 1946) a joy to read. There are many more studies of Sor Juana. There are even some psychoanalytical interpretations. ¡Sálvame Dios!

5. No one ever spends very much time telling us what has not yet been written, what there is left for us to do. It would be wonderful to have a bilingual edition of Sor

Juana's poetry, the English on one side, the Spanish on the other. There is no first-rate scholarly biography of Sor Juana. There is no splendid popular biography. There is no good children's story of her life.

6. Sor Juana sounds to me like a gifted woman who never really had anyone to talk to. If she had lived in twentieth-century England, she might have enjoyed knowing Virginia Woolf. Woolf, a novelist and literary critic, chronicles her rage when she sees dumb men enter the university (Oxford or Cambridge) and realizes that she can never attend, simply because she is a woman. You might like to read her book A Room of One's Own, 1929 (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1957). If you get hooked, a sequel is Three Guineas (written 1938, published in paperback in 1966).

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. If you trap the genius of a writer-poet-critic in an illiterate environment, it will never develop. How many opportunities for education did Sor Juana find? What allowed her to progress?

2. I calculated that the net worth of Sor Juana's mother was about $2,000. Do you agree? What did her wealth consist of?

3. Sor Juana never went to college like you. She was self-educated. However, her "Reply" gives you enough information to allow you to imagine what university core requirements were like then. How does your education differ from hers? Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of being self-taught, teacher-taught, and teacher-fellow-student-taught? Which do you prefer?

4. List all the ways that the bishop's letter would bolster Sor Juana's confidence. Explain the ways that it would hurt her deeply. Do you think the bishop was Sor Juana's enemy? Do you suppose she thought so?

5. What in Sor Juana's experience can help us understand her when she succumbs to guilt and abets Them in the murder of her mind?

6. Do you think Sor Juana was a feminist?

7.

Evaluation

There are many ways to evaluate academic work. I know how to do only one. Feel free to utilize the other methods.

THE TAKE-HOME ESSAY

Required. A 5-7 page essay, with footnotes. Use footnotes (1) after every direct quotation and (2) after every substantive point, to tell how you know what you know.
Sources. Required unit (and one additional source, with teacher's approval).
Evaluation criteria.

1. Problems should be posed, considered, answered.
2. Evidence or authoritative backing should be given for every generalization.
3. Progression of thought should be clear, self-aware, logical (don't contradict yourself), well-organized.
4. Footnote every quote and every important point.
5. Writing should be clear, graceful, readable, easily understandable.

Audience. Write for a sensitive, sympathetic, intelligent reader who knows nothing of Mexican history.
Preparation. The material should be thoroughly discussed in class. Thoroughly discussed. A part of learning, interestingly enough, consists of thinking out loud, and wondering . . .
Subject of essay. The most confident students pose, discuss, and answer their own questions. But this is hard to do, so I bring in a few questions and ask students to contribute a few, and we leave it at that.
Time. Questions are posed one week ahead of the due date. If the students howl like panthers, a week and a half ahead.
The Net. If you are dissatisfied with your grade, you may rewrite your essay, after consultation with the instructor.

HOW THE WRITING OF AN "A" ESSAY FEELS

In 1972 I offered the first course on women's history at the University of Hawaii, and I pioneered the use of this kind of take-home essay. Some students did so beautifully, I was dazzled. I bribed them with doughnuts and coffee to tell me how they did it. So this section was not written by me. It was thought out loud by Charlene Tomoeda, Elizabeth Lum, Sonja Leuzzi, Kathy Muir, Teresa Mansson, Joan Pope, and Arthur Young.

Attitude All agree: "I must be forced to write an essay. I don't want to do it. I have to accept the fact that I must do it, it will not do itself. Then I can begin. It also helps to want to be creative and to want to communicate."

STEP I: PREPARATION, STUDY, AND REVIEW. The first and single most important thing to do is to read the questions very carefully. Re-read them until you can come to grips with the problem. Then rephrase the question in your own words. It has to make sense to you.

Re-read the readings carefully. Hunt for a pattern, the basic ideas that connect the questions to what you have read.

Review reading and classnotes. Make connections. Authors ask questions and give answers. Choose the ones that interest you or trouble you. Connect ideas. Connect.

Ruthlessly and relentlessly discard what is unclear and irrelevant. Retain and depend on what started you thinking, what stimulated you.

Beware of trying to do everything, of writing the answer. You cannot solve "The Woman Question" single-handed. The issues are alive, unfinished. Stay open.

Some people make a chart to help organize information. Charts clearly show (1) who says/does what, (2) the holes--what is not being considered, (3) the blurs--what is unclear.

STEP II: OBSESSING. What have you to say to that question--and vice versa? Review the question and select the themes. Rephrase the ones you are going to use in questions phrased in your own words. Then stop and let them work on you. This part is very irritating because nothing is clear. Give yourself time. These are specific nagging apprehensions about the question, and things will come to you as you walk

around, do your work, wash the dishes. Strangely enough, it is a dialectic between active and passive. You must bear down and be specific; you must let up and let the connections come to you.

Note: if you are anxiously fretting about "what she wants" or "the grade" or "this is too hard," you'll get exhausted. Go back to "Attitude." You are telling yourself you don't want to do it.

STEP III: CHOOSE YOUR AUDIENCE. Someone who cares, who reads books, but who knows nothing about this course. Write for this person.

STEP IV: WRITING THE DRAFT. Introduction Tell what you are going to do and why we should care. Introduce the themes. State issues or specifics you will deal with. Narrow the question down and re-state it in ways you can get at. Some use compare/contrast on the introduction, some on the conclusion. (Compare--what they share; contrast--how they differ.)

The paragraphs Keep at the question point by point. Organize paragraphs step by step. Keep relating the themes and issues to each other. Keep pointing out the connections. Even if you think they are obvious, point them out anyway. Nothing is obvious.

Substantiate your ideas An unsubstantiated assertion reveals itself because it does not tell (1) how it works. It may "feel" OK, but you cannot go behind it. It does not tell (2) how you or your author knows, either.

First draft On your first draft, just write. Jot your references down, but look them up later.

Some hints on organization. Chronological order is the backbone of time that historians use to keep sequences in order. If nothing makes sense, put it in chronological order and see if anything develops.

Make clear the difference between what your author says and what you make of it. Don't forget to give yourself credit for your own ideas.

When you are not sure, use words to help you convey the uncertainty: "may," "appear," "seems."

Conclusion: Tell what you did. Summarize what you've come up with. Do a reprise: hum those catchy tunes again. Agree with or oppose the theme. Compare and contrast.

STEP V: REVISING THE MANUSCRIPT. If possible, materialize that someone in Step III, let him or her read the draft and ask questions; let yourself explain what you meant. Rewrite or rephrase for clarity. Review your notes and fill in the footnotes.

Let it sit overnight. Then read it over. Make final changes. Copy it over and hand it in.

STEP VI: REWARD. You have done something very hard, and you have finished it. You must stop and congratulate yourself and feel some satisfaction. This is the beginning of the end of your vulnerability to your teacher. Your own confidence and sense that you've done the best you can is your best defense.

Arranging These Units for Classroom Use

The teacher really has to do this alone. It depends on how much time you want the students to spend on them. It depends on how big the class is. Whenever you introduce a new structure into a classroom, your method just has to be experimental and your attitude flexible. You have to try it out and grope around until you figure out how to do it your way. You have to stay open for student suggestions and reactions. Luckily, since you seek to do it your way, you can't make much of a mistake and neither can the students. It's scary to try something new, but not too scary if there is much to gain and very little to lose.

I have been working on this method since 1970. It has been thoroughly worked over and commented on by student participants. I change something every time they open their mouths. In general, the students like it. They think it's fair. They think it focuses on something most college classes take for granted--how people learn. They think the work is serious and interesting enough and not Mickey Mouse. They think it helps them write better papers for other classes. They like the kind of intellectual fellowship it stimulates among students. (I'm not going to tell you about the surly young man who told me I should save the notary records for the Gong Show. My job description doesn't require me to listen to <u>everything</u>.)

To experiment, I might use the Aztec prescriptions for discussion only, just to rehearse the method out loud. Then the students might choose which of the other two units to write the paper on. (But only after both units had been thoroughly discussed.) Of course, if someone came screaming that I was a dirty racist because I wouldn't let anyone write on the Aztecs, I would reconsider. (You'll be happy to know that one of my students complained that my standards were too high--because I was a Mexican. That's the biggest compliment I've received from a loudmouth for a long time.)

Freedom is choice. The more choices available to students in the classroom, the better. Isn't it strange that no one ever discusses what Academic Freedom has to do with students?